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MARXIST-LENINIST THEORY

A. P. Sheptulin

Marxist–Leninist Philosophy

This is a systematic presentation of the basic aspects of the Marxist-Leninist philosophy of dialectical and historical materialism: the concepts of matter and consciousness, the laws and categories of dialectics, the mode of production, social revolution, etc. The book also examines the connection between the philosophical concepts and people's practical and cognitive activity. The author draws on modern natural and social sciences and practical experience. Special sections are devoted to a critical analysis of modern idealistic views of the basic problems and categories of philosophy and quasi-scientific concepts of the nature of social phenomena.

The book is for readers interested in philosophy and the problems of dialectical and historical materialism.

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FOREWORD

Marxist-Leninist philosophy is a coherent scientific theory that examines the interrelationship between objective reality and consciousness, the universal laws of nature, society and human thought, as well as the laws governing the functioning and development of man's practical and cognitive activities. It is the world outlook of the working class, whose historical mission is to eliminate the exploitation of man by man and to build a classless communist society, thus ensuring the all-round development of every individual and the complete satisfaction of his material and cultural requirements. It is also a general method for the cognition and revolutionary remaking of reality.

Thus to study Marxist-Leninist philosophy and master its laws and principles is a task of primary importance for the working people seeking to eliminate exploitation and to build a new classless society. The Soviet Union and other socialist countries focus particular attention on educating people in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism. The Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 25th Party Congress noted: "Marxism-Leninism is the only reliable basis for formulating the right strategy and

tactics. It gives us an understanding of the historical perspective, helps us to determine the lines of our socio-economic and political development for years ahead, and correctly to find our orientation in international developments."[1]

The purpose of this book is to introduce the reader to the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism. It is a translation from the Russian of А. П. Шептулин. Философия марксизма-ленинизма. М., Политиздат, 1970. The author has revised and supplemented the Russian edition.

[1] L. I. Brezhnev, *Report of the CPSU Central Committee and the Immediate Tasks of the Party in Home and Foreign Policy. XXVth Congress of the CPSU*, Moscow, 1976, p. 86.

Chapter 1

THE ROLE OF PHILOSOPHY IN SOCIETY

Before expounding Marxist-Leninist philosophy we must establish what philosophy means in general, how it differs from other forms of social consciousness, and what functions it performs.

1. Philosophy as a World Outlook

a) The Concept of a World Outlook

Philosophy is the sum total of views on the world, but this definition does not specify its distinguishing feature. The fact is that other views exist in society apart from philosophical ones. So how do philosophical views differ from non-philosophical, such as natural-scientific views?

Special natural and social sciences study the laws inherent in certain areas of reality, or in certain processes. Physics, for example, studies phenomena related to bodies travelling in space, the movement of molecules, "elementary" particles, and so forth; biology deals with problems related to living nature; economic sciences cover the social relations that take shape during the production, distribution and consumption of material values; pedagogy deals with upbringing and teaching,

and so on. Philosophy, on the other hand, embraces the entire world and all its processes, rather than confining itself to a certain area of reality or a certain part of the world.

Thus, *philosophy develops a system of views on the world as a whole and gives a general interpretation of processes occurring within it, i.e. it is the people's world outlook.*

b) The Fundamental Question of Philosophy. Materialism and Idealism

Philosophy studies the relationship of matter and consciousness, nature and spirit, and determines what is primary and what is secondary. The question of the relation of matter to consciousness is fundamental to philosophy. The answer to it influences the solution of all other philosophical problems.

This is where the major difference lies between philosophy and the other sciences, which do not analyse the relationship of matter and consciousness. They confine themselves to studying only the objective properties of phenomena. Even sciences concerned with psychic phenomena do not contrast the material and the ideal.

Philosophers are divided in two major camps–materialists and idealists–depending on how they answer the fundamental question of philosophy.

Materialists maintain that matter is primary in relation to consciousness and underlies all being. Consciousness is secondary, being a property of matter that manifests itself under certain condi-

tions. Materialists include, among many others, the ancient Greek philosopher Democritus, who held that atoms formed the basis of the world; the 17th-century Dutch philosopher Spinoza who regarded the human mind as an integral property or attribute of matter; and the 18th-century French philosopher Diderot, who maintained that nature existed independently of the mind.

In contrast to materialist philosophers, idealists maintain that it is the spiritual, i.e. consciousness, thought, or idea, that is primary or basic. Matter, they say, is a derivative of spirit or consciousness, being just a form of the latter's existence.

Though the idealists all agree that spirit forms the basis of the world, they give different interpretations to this postulate. Some of them insist that spirit, which underlies all phenomena in the world, exists in the form of human consciousness, sensations, perceptions, notions or ideas, i.e. in the form of subjective human activity. These are called subjective idealists. There are others, the so-called objective idealists, who maintain that the spiritual exists as the so-called Absolute Idea, pure consciousness, and the like.

The 18th-century German philosopher Fichte, for example, was a subjective idealist. He maintained that the surrounding world was derived from the activity of the subject, from the self-consciousness of an "Ego" or "I". The ancient Greek philosopher Plato, on the other hand, represented objective idealism. In his view, the real world around us consisted of ideal substances, while sensuous things were but imperfect copies of the

latter that emerged as a result of the blending of an idea with amorphous matter existing merely as a possibility.

c) Dualism in Philosophy

Materialism, which explains all phenomena on the basis of matter, and idealism, which derives the existing world from spirit or consciousness, are both monistic (from the Greek *monos,* meaning one) philosophies. They are based on one philosophical principle and proceed from one premise.

Yet there are philosophers who seek to prove that the world has two primary bases–material and ideal. These, they say, are independent of each other. One of them underlies the existence of material things, the physical world, while the other underlies the spiritual world. This doctrine is known as dualism (from the Latin *duo,* meaning two).

The 17th-century French philosopher Descartes, a dualist, held that reality was based on two substances–material, with extension as its attribute, and ideal, with thought as its attribute. Independent of each other, these two substances merged in man and assumed the form of body and soul. Though they existed side by side in man, Descartes maintained, they still remained quite independent and equal.

Dualists claim to follow their own, independent line in philosophy, distinct from materialism and idealism. They fail, however, to uphold this line consistently. With respect to specific problems they are compelled to take either a materialist or

an idealist stand, thus making their position inconsistent, contradictory and mechanistic, insomuch as they try to reconcile incompatible premises and principles.

d) Searching for a Third Line in Philosophy

Other philosophers, too, who ultimately prove to be idealists, seek to place themselves above both materialism and idealism and find a third line in philosophy.

Such attempts were especially frequent in the period of developed capitalism, when the victorious bourgeoisie came to realise the danger of the materialist world outlook with its inherent atheistic and revolutionary conclusions.

At the turn of the 20th century, Ernst Mach, the Austrian physicist and philosopher, made an attempt to define the "third" line in philosophy. He lashed out against both materialist and idealist views, branding them "one-sided". Mach affirmed that neither matter nor consciousness formed the basis of the world, but rather the "neutral elements of the universe", which could be both material and ideal. Intertwining, they make up the material or physical world, while in relationship with man's nervous system they produce the ideal or psychic world. According to Mach, the physical and psychic worlds are intrinsically interconnected. The physical world can thus be constructed from psychic phenomena, but the possibility of constructing the psychic world out of physical phenomena is excluded.

In actual fact, however, these assertions do not constitute any "third" line in philosophy. If the theory of "neutral elements" is reason to affirm that the physical world can be constructed out of psychic phenomena, but not vice versa, then this line of reasoning fully conforms with idealism, since the psychic or the consciousness are primary in his case.

Karl Jaspers, a prominent existentialist likewise tries to find a "third" line in philosophy. He agrees with Mach that neither matter nor consciousness form the basis of the world, but rather something else which includes both of these. According to Jaspers, this "else", or this third, is the "universal" which manifests itself either as pure "existence", or "supernatural", or "consciousness", or the "universe", and so forth. If, however, the "universal" proves able to manifest itself as the universe, consciousness, the natural and the supernatural, it in no way differs from the God declared by theologians to be the source of all being. Thus, Jaspers' views coincide with those shared by objective idealists, who believe that consciousness is the maker of all that exists.

Apart from those philosophers who place themselves above both materialism and idealism by ignoring matter and consciousness and searching for a "third" way, there are thinkers, and even schools of thought, that strive for the same goal by neglecting the fundamental question of philosophy and declaring it a pseudo-problem devoid of any meaning. This view is upheld by the neo-positivists Bertrand Russel, Rudolf Carnap, and others.

The neo-positivists argue that philosophy is unable to determine what is primary–matter or consciousness–and so should ignore the problem. It should confine itself exclusively to logical analysis of scientific data, semantic analysis of words and propositions. A meaningful analysis of scientific data, of the semantics of words and propositions, however, is inconceivable without first determining what is primary–matter or consciousness–in so far as such an analysis makes it necessary to establish whether scientific data reflect definite aspects and relations in the existing world or are products of the creative activity of consciousness, thought. The neo-positivists opt for the latter view. They derive the essence of sensuous data and the meaning of words and propositions from the creative activity of consciousness or thought, rather than from the outside world, and thus objectively assume an idealist position.

Thus all attempts to find a "third" line in philosophy can only lead to idealism.

e) The Social and Epistemological Roots of Idealism

There are many reasons for the appearance of the idealist view of the environment. Some of them stem from the economic system of society, the social position of its classes and their requirements, while others take root in knowledge, in the cognitive activity of man.

The factors of social life that are conducive to the emergence and spread of the idealist view of man's environment constitute the social roots of

idealism. They include, primarily, the separation of mental from physical labour and their transformation into opposites. Marx and Engels wrote: "Once the ruling ideas have been separated from the ruling individuals and, above all, from the relationships which result from a given stage of the mode of production, and in this way the conclusion has been reached that history is always under the sway of ideas, it is very easy to abstract from these various ideas *'the* idea', the thought, etc., as the dominant force in history, and thus to consider all these separate ideas and concepts as 'forms of self-determination' of the Concept developing in history."[1]

The social roots of idealism also include the strivings of the exploiting classes to provide an idealist answer to the fundamental question of philosophy and to spread idealist views which provide a theoretical justification of religion, and thus are conducive to the spiritual enslavement of the working people and divert them from the revolutionary struggle to transform the existing situation in the world.

As for the epistemological roots of idealism, they are to be found in the realm of knowledge.

Knowledge or cognition is a complex and contradictory process by which reality is reflected in the consciousness of man. Exaggerating any aspect of knowledge, depriving it of bonds with its other aspects and with matter, and absolutising it in-

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Moscow, 1976, p. 69.

evitably lead to idealism. The epistemological roots of idealism lie therefore in making an absolute of some aspect or peculiarity of the process of cognition, which leads to one-sided interpretation and distortion of it. "Rectilinearity and one-sidedness," Lenin wrote, "woodenness and petrification, subjectivism and subjective blindness–*voilà* the epistemological roots of idealism."[1]

Sensations and perceptions are the forms of sense knowledge that depend on man, his nervous system, psychic state, experience, and the like. If, however, we exaggerate this dependence, forget that sensations and perceptions depend not only on man, but also on the objects influencing his sense organs, that they reflect the corresponding aspects of these objects, we come inevitably to subjectivism, i.e. we shall affirm that the content of sensations and perceptions is determined by the subject (man), by his emotions, which will bring us to idealism–the recognition of sensations and perceptions as the basis of all being. This was how idealists, such as Berkeley, Mach, Avenarius, reasoned.

By cognising the surrounding world, people pinpoint the general qualities of the objects and phenomena they encounter in everyday life. On this basis, they develop general notions and then concepts of such qualities. These notions and concepts pass from one generation to the next, while the objects reflected by them are constantly changing. This creates the impression that concepts are sta-

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 363.

ble, constant, eternal, while objects, on the contrary, are unstable, transient, temporary. The concept "man", for example, emerged in ancient times, but since the process of its formation has long been forgotten one is inclined to believe it eternal. Individuals, however, are not eternal–they are born and they die. So, exaggerating the relative stability of concepts, depriving them of their bonds with the external objects which they emerged to reflect and turning them into something independent and basic, necessarily leads to idealism.

2. Philosophy as Methodology

Philosophy forms man's world outlook and enables him to develop an integral idea of world phenomena, thus helping him to pattern his everyday behaviour and practical activity. But this is not the only role philosophy plays in society. It also performs methodological functions by developing a general *method of cognition which is the totality of interrelated principles or demands advanced on the basis of general laws discovered in the surrounding world and in knowledge, and constituting a conclusion drawn on the basis of the historical development of social knowledge.*

The history of philosophy knows two opposing philosophical methods of cognition–the *metaphysical* and the *dialectical.*

The metaphysical method took shape in the natural sciences in the 16th-17th centuries. At that time natural scientists, in view of the requirements of developing production, set themselves the task

of studying specific aspects and properties of the surrounding world, the concrete forms of being. They broke down the objects of their studies into separate parts, snatched them out of their natural or historical context, and studied "each one separately, its nature, special causes, effects, etc.".[1] This resulted in a tendency to consider the objects and phenomena of the external world in isolation from their relationship and interdependence, in isolation from their motion and development, which in turn resulted in a general metaphysical method of cognition. According to this method, the objects and phenomena of the external world are isolated, independent of each other, devoid of contradictions and the capacity to develop, with always the same qualitative features, i.e. unchanged.

Characteristically, modern metaphysicists absolutise separate aspects and forms of the motion of matter and reduce the higher to the lower.

The principles of the dialectical method of cognition began to emerge as natural science started to investigate the processes inherent in objects rather than the objects and their properties themselves. This method postulates that, in reality, all objects and phenomena are intrinsically interconnected and interdependent, that all of them are inherently contradictory and that due to the struggle of opposites they undergo constant changes and pass to a higher qualitative state.

The dialectical method is drawn from the general

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1969, p. 30.

laws of reality and knowledge. It is, therefore, the only consistent scientific (philosophical) method helping scientists in their cognitive activity.

3. Philosophy and Man's Practical Activities

By studying the general laws of reality and knowledge and developing man's world outlook and general method of cognition on their basis, philosophy influences human life substantially. People's behaviour and the guiding principles behind their practical activities depend, to a large extent on their general views, on their philosophical ideas.

Thus, people who are inclined to the idealist world outlook often give prominence in their personal lives to God, or some other supernatural forces. They are prone to rely on fate, rather than on knowledge of the laws governing changes in their environment. In contrast, people with a Marxist world outlook rely in their activities on knowledge of the objective laws of reality. Their main objective is continuous transformation and improvement of the conditions of life, rather than adaptation to them, as is the goal of people sharing a religious, idealistic world outlook.

Besides, philosophy, dialectical materialism in particular, is linked with practical experience through implementing the methodological function of dialectical materialism. The latter studies the general laws of reality and, on this basis, formulates certain principles or demands and requirements that must be observed in solving a particu-

lar problem. In other words, dialectical materialism develops the method of action, of revolutionary transformation of reality.

4. The Subject-Matter of Philosophy

Having discussed the specific features of philosophy and its functions, we may proceed to a definition of its subject-matter.

Philosophy is a world outlook and a method of cognition developed on the basis of a specific solution to the problem of the relationship between matter and consciousness.

This definition applies to any philosophy, to any philosophical view–materialist or idealist, dialectical or metaphysical. But here we do not intend to define the subject-matter of every philosophical school, and will confine ourselves to that of the Marxist-Leninist philosophy.

The Marxist-Leninist philosophy is a science studying regularities in the relationship between matter and consciousness, the universal laws of nature, society, and thought, and developing a world outlook and a method of cognising and transforming reality.

5. Philosophy and Special Sciences

Some view philosophy as the "science of sciences" that should incorporate all other sciences and allot each one of them its place and the principles underlying its scope and development. This view was widespread in pre-Marxian philosophy.

Some bourgeois philosophers, however, continued to support this view even after the emergence of dialectical materialism.

Positivists hold the opposite opinion. They maintain that special sciences have no need of philosophy. Moreover, they argue that philosophy should be abolished, since it only harms and hampers scientific cognition; nothing in reality corresponds to its principles; it studies nothing and cannot study anything; it does not and cannot possibly have a scientific method of cognition.

This is true, to a certain extent, of idealist philosophy, which substitutes the construction of various principles on the basis of pure thought for the study of objective reality. Dialectical materialism is a totally different matter, for it has its own subject-matter for study and its own method of cognition.

As distinct from special sciences, which study the specific laws characteristic of a certain field of reality, dialectical materialism studies general laws covering all fields of the objective world and all phenomena. General laws, however, do not manifest themselves independently of or alongside specific laws–they do so through the latter. So in order to discover a philosophical law, one has to refer to special sciences, to analyse their specific laws and single out that which recurs in all fields of real life, and is thus universal. By this token philosophy is inseparable from the special sciences and the scientific data obtained by them; it draws on such data and can develop successfully only through generalising scientific information.

Special sciences, in their turn, are inseparable from philosophy and the results of its studies. Indeed, philosophy studies the general laws of reality and the regularities governing the relationship between matter and consciousness and on this basis develops a theory of knowledge and logic, i.e. laws and forms of thinking, and together with all this a general method of cognition. Special sciences, on the other hand, cannot exist and develop without using logical forms and laws of thinking. Neither can they do without a general method of cognition. They are unable to evolve all this by themselves, insofar as they do not study the general laws of reality governing the thinking process and underlying the logical laws and principles of the dialectical method of cognition.

Dialectical materialism and special sciences, though they have their own fields of study, are closely interconnected, interdependent, and cannot develop one without the other.

6. The Partisanship of Philosophy

In any class society philosophy is always partisan. It evolves a system of views of the world as a whole, of surrounding reality, and at the same time expresses and defends the interests of certain classes or social groups. Through philosophical views, classes and social groups theoretically comprehend their position in society and their relationship with the surrounding world and the processes taking place within it. Philosophy is the basis of the world view of a definite class, and as such it

moulds the way of thought and behaviour of this class, shaping its requirements and ideals. "Recent philosophy," Lenin wrote, "is as partisan as was philosophy two thousand years ago. The contending parties are essentially–although this is concealed by a pseudo-erudite quackery of new terms or by a weak-minded non-partisanship–materialism and idealism."[1]

As a rule, materialism is associated with progressive classes and social groups interested in historical advance, whereas idealism is associated with reactionary classes struggling to perpetuate the existing order. Materialism relies on science and makes use of scientific data; idealism, in contrast, is often bound up with religion and, basing itself on its dogmas, seeks to substantiate the need for it. Lenin stressed the partisanship of bourgeois philosophy and its ties with theology when he wrote: "... *Not a single one* of these [bourgeois–*Author*] professors, who are capable of making very valuable contributions in the special fields of chemistry, history or physics, *can be trusted one iota* when it comes to philosophy. Why? For the same reason that *not a single* professor of political economy, who may be capable of very valuable contributions in the field of factual and specialised investigations, can be trusted *one iota* when it comes to the general theory of political economy. For in modern society the latter is as much a *partisan* science as is *epistemology*."[2]

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[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 358.
[2] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 342.

Chapter II

THE STRUGGLE OF MATERIALISM AGAINST IDEALISM IN THE PRE-MARXIAN PHILOSOPHY

1. The Emergence of Philosophy

Philosophy, as a system of man's views of the world, as a world outlook, has not been always in existence. It emerged at a certain stage in the development of society, when human thought had attained a high level and there were favourable social conditions for it to emerge. In the initial stages of society's existence and development, man's productive forces were extremely underdeveloped, while man himself was totally dependent on nature and the elements. Since man was unaware of the real causes of various phenomena, he was naturally inclined to animate them and consider them to be wrought by supernatural forces and creatures. This is how belief in the existence of God, religion and religious views emerged.

Thus, a religious world outlook engendered by the savage's impotence vis-à-vis nature and his fear of the mysterious elements affecting his life was the first, initial form of a general view of the world.

When society was divided into classes–slaves and slave-owners–religious views came to be engendered by still another cause, namely, the dependence of man on spontaneous social forces

that were just as harmful to him as were nature's elemental forces. Besides, for the slave-owners religion in slave-owning society becomes a moral means for justifying and perpetuating the exploitation of slaves. The emergence of classes led to the emergence of the class struggle, which was inevitably reflected in people's spiritual life and in the struggle of different world outlooks corresponding to the different positions of classes and other social groups in society. In slave-owning society, mental work separated from manual labour and became the monopoly of slave-owners. The ideological or philosophical struggle was therefore waged mainly between separate groups of slave-owners occupying different places in society, such as progressive artisan and merchant strata of the slave-owning class and conservative aristocratic groups of tribal origin. The artisan and merchant section of slave-owners sought to develop the productive forces and trade, and to bring about democratic reforms within the slave-owning state. The aristocratic strata, on the other hand, opposed such reforms. The struggle waged by the progressive social groups against the reactionary aristocracy led to the emergence and development of a materialist world outlook opposed to the latter group's religious views of the world.

While opposing materialism, representatives of the reactionary section of slave-owners began to develop idealistic conceptions to substantiate religion and to combat the materialist view of various phenomena. This was how idealism took shape.

It was a reaction to the emerging materialist world outlook. Once having taken shape, idealism and materialism began to wage a constant, unremitting struggle. The entire subsequent history of philosophy is nothing but the struggle between the two trends in philosophy–materialism and idealism.

2. The Struggle Between Materialism and Idealism in Slave-Owning Society

The materialist view of the world is rooted in the distant past. It began to emerge in Egypt and Babylonia at the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 2nd millennium B.C. It was at that time that the idea was recorded that water was the prime source of the world, giving birth to all things and living creatures.

Only in the 1st millennium B.C., however, did materialism become a more or less integral system of views. This was particularly true of India and China. In India, for instance, the philosophical trend *Lokayata* (literally, the views of those who recognise only this world–*loka*) gained currency as a fully developed materialist system of world views. The school was founded by Brihaspati.

Adherents of *Lokayata* harshly critisised the religious beliefs that were then popular in India and were contained in the Vedas (scriptures of Hinduism). They resolutely opposed all forms of magic and superstition and exposed as false the priests' dogmas about the immortality of the soul,

which allegedly remained alive in the other world after death. According to their doctrine, there was not nor could there possibly be any other life, except in this world, so man's soul died together with his body.

At about the same time a materialist view of the world took shape in China. A school opposing religion and asserting that the world was eternal and consisted of fire, water, wood, soil and metal, was widespread in China between the 9th and the 7th centuries B.C. All things, the first Chinese materialists maintained, were various combinations of the above five elements.

The materialist world outlook was developed in the philosophical system of Taoism that emerged in the 6th century B.C. and was ascribed to Lao-tze. His followers considered that the world was eternal and in a constant state of motion and change. Taoists maintained that motion was directed and governed by *Tao*–the path taken by natural events (*tao* means path, law).

The materialist systems that emerged in India and China in the 1st millennium B.C. at first fought against religious beliefs and later against idealism–the theoretical basis of religion. These systems developed and matured in the course of this contention.

From the 6th century B.C. onwards, philosophy began to develop spectacularly in ancient Greece. There too, the materialist view of the world was the outcome of the struggle against religion and reflected the interests of the progressive strata of the slave-owning class. Materialist philosophy in

ancient Greece was founded by the so-called Milesian (Ionic) School: Thales (c. 624-c. 547 B.C.), Anaximander (c. 610-c. 546 B.C.), and Anaximenes (c. 585-c. 525 B.C.).

Thales considered water the basic element of all things. Everything originated from water and everything eventually turned into water.

Anaximander thought that the primary source of all things was the "apeuron" (the unlimited, boundless), and inchoate mass, separated out to make the physical world by rotary motion and educing the opposites, such as "moist" and "dry", "cold" and "warm". Things and entire worlds that had emerged and lasted for a certain time, disintegrated for the same reasons (motion and education of opposites), disappeared and then turned into the "boundless" again. Thus, Anaximander held, the world was in a constant state of motion, rotation, which caused some things and phenomena to emerge from the "boundless" and others to disappear back into it. Holding a materialist view, Anaximander clearly attempted to present the world dialectically, in motion, attended, to a certain extent, by the process of divarication of the whole (the "boundless") into opposites (eduction of opposite things and phenomena).

Anaximenes held a similar view of the origin of sensuous things. He taught that air was the basic universal substance and that the motion of air caused some things to emerge and others to disappear. Air, being in a constant state of motion, either rarefied or condensed, thus turning from one substance into another. When air rarefied, for

example, it turned into fire, whereas when it condensed it became wind. Further condensation turned air into clouds, and still further into soil and eventually rock. All other things, God included, emerged from the above states of matter.

The first Greek materialists who expressed and defended the interests of the progressive groups of slave-owners were initially confronted by religious dogmas concerning the origin and essence of the surrounding world, and then with idealist philosophy developed by reactionary aristocratic groups of slave-owners.

Pythagoreanism, founded by the Greek philosopher and mathematician Pythagoras (c. 580-c. 500 B.C.), was the first form of idealism in ancient Greece. The Pythagoreans believed that number was the essence of all things and that all relations could be expressed numerically. The whole world depended on numbers and was, they maintained, but a harmony of numbers.

The Pythagoreans developed their philosophy and assailed the materialist views of the Milesian School. Materialism, however, was rapidly gaining popularity.

An appreciable contribution to the development of the materialist world outlook was made by the Greek philosopher Heraclitus of Ephesus (c. 530-c. 470 B.C.). He held that fire was the underlying substance, the first principle of the world, and that it caused things to emerge and disappear. Heraclitus believed that everything came from fire and eventually turned into fire. Fire, he said, was like

gold, which could be exchanged for everything, just like everything could be exchanged for gold. Heraclitus maintained that the world was not created by anybody, but existed eternally and irrespective of any supernatural forces. The world, he wrote, was one whole created by neither God nor man. It was and would always be a living fire bound to blaze up and die away.

Heraclitus reiterated the idea of the continuous motion and change of the surrounding world, of contradiction as a source of that motion, of the possibility of one opposite transforming into another. He thus formulated a number of dialectical principles which to some extent reflected reality, though they were not based on scientific data. Heraclitus affirmed: "Upon those who step into the same river different and ever different waters flow down" (because when we step into water the second time it will certainly change); "There is one and the same in us—alive and dead, awake and sleeping, young and old. Indeed, this, when changed, is that, and conversely, that, when changed, is this"; "What is cold turns warm, while what is warm turns cold; what is moist dries up, while what is dry gets moist."

The further progress of materialism in Greek philosophy is associated with the works of Democritus (5th century B.C.) who advanced an atomic theory of matter. According to this theory, the world was made up of an infinite number of atoms and of the vacuum in which they moved. Moving in the vacuum, atoms met and formed various bodies. All that existed was made up of atoms.

Even man's soul was nothing more than a combination of particular atoms. Democritus turned his ideas of the soul against the Pythagoreans, who maintained that the soul was immortal. Democritus believed that the soul died together with the body. The body's death signified the disintegration of the atoms making it up, which meant that the atoms making up the soul disintegrated as well.

The atomic theory was later developed by the Greek philosopher Epicurus (4th-3rd century B.C.) and the Roman philosopher Titus Lucretius Carus (1st century B. C.).

The Greek philosopher Plato (427-347 B.C.), who expressed the interests of the reactionary slave-owning aristocracy, came out against the atomic theory of Democritus and the materialist views shared by other philosophers, Heraclitus in particular.

Platonism is based on the division of all that exists into the real world, consisting of general ideas ("ideal essences"), and the unreal world, made up of assorted sensuous things, being just a reflection or a shadow of the real world (the world of ideas). To illustrate the correlation between the world of sensuous things (the unreal world) and the world of ideas (the real world), Plato gives the following example. Imagine a man chained to a pole in a dark cave, his back always to the entrance from where the sunlight comes, so that he cannot see what is going on outside the cave. When people pass the cave entrance their shadows and the shadows of things they carry would appear on the wall facing the entrance. The

man would see these shadows and take them for real, though they are but imperfect imprints of the real world. Sensuous things, the world of the senses, are similar imprints or, to be more precise, shadows of the world of ideas. According to Plato, we are just like that prisoner in the cave—we take this world of things as real, though it is nothing but a shadow of the real world, the world of ideas concealed from us.

Plato believes that the world of ideas is integral thanks to the Idea of the Good, and is eternal, whereas separate things and phenomena are transient and temporary. They emerge from the amorphous and vague being (matter) as a result of combining with a certain idea, but as soon as the idea abandons the thing it has created, the latter ceases to exist. It follows then that real things and phenomena are created by ideas, which ultimately take their beginning in God.

Plato's theory of ideas was severely criticised by Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), whose teaching is the pinnacle of ancient Greek philosophy. Aristotle summed up and further developed all the philosophical systems advanced by his predecessors. His works encompass all aspects of reality—nature, human society and knowledge. Assailing Plato's philosophy, particularly his belief that ideas were primary to sensuous things and that they existed independently, Aristotle proved that no general ideas existed outside and independently of things. All that is real manifests itself through separate things. As for general ideas, they emerge in man's consciousness in the process of cognition as he is

confronted with repetition and becomes aware of it.

Aristotle vacillated between materialism and idealism.

He held that all things originated from primordial matter characterised by vagueness and a lack of form, i.e., in fact it was just the possibility of existence. This possibility turned into a real sensuous thing only when matter combined with a form (Aristotle's term), which gave it definiteness.

Although Aristotle's world view was basically materialist, it also had idealistic overtones. First, he divorced primordial matter from motion, presenting the former as a vague and amorphous mass. Motion was introduced into it from outside, by form. Second, the active element that caused changes in matter and its transformation from an uncertain into a certain state, and then from one state into another–i.e. form–originated, in the final analysis, from God as the prime mover. All this reveals the inconsistency of Artistotle's teaching. There are metaphysical and idealist elements in his views, alongside elements of dialectics and materialism.

The crisis of slave-owning society caused a decline in ancient Greek philosophy after Aristotle. A trend emerged towards transition from materialism to idealism and mysticism. The revival and propagation of idealist views was especially manifest during the fall of the Roman Empire, when idealism became linked to religion, particularly to emerging Christianity, which became the dominant ideology in the period of European feudalism.

3. The Struggle of Materialism Against Idealism in Medieval Philosophy

The Middle Ages, when religious ideology reigned supreme, and permeated and subdued all spheres of society's spiritual life, left an imprint on the development of philosophy as well. During that time philosophy served religion objectively and officially. It was called upon to justify and substantiate religious dogmas, and to prove their validity and stability. All philosophical problems, therefore, were inevitably tinged with religious connotations.

The problem of the correlation between general ideas—the so-called universals—and separate things of the sensuous world—the particulars—was of great concern to medieval philosophers. It had been fiercely debated throughout the Middle Ages. The solution of the fundamental question of philosophy and the struggle between materialism and idealism at that time was intrinsically linked to the solution of the problem of the correlation between the individual and the general or universal, between general ideas and isolated things or occurrences.

Idealists maintained that the universal existed independently of particular things and prior to them; it was associated with God. Moreover, God himself was the universal essence of all that existed. As regards particular things, they were eventually created by God. The exponents of this theory were called *realists,* insofar as they acknowledged and substantiated the real existence of the universals.

Materialists held the opposite view. They believed that the universal could not exist in reality, let alone prior to the particular. Only particular things really existed. The universal, they reasoned, was but a name reflecting nothing and therefore non-existent in reality. The supporters of this view were called *nominalists*, because they rejected the real existence of the universal and declared it but a name.

The teaching of the medieval philosopher Saint Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109) may serve as an example of the idealist school. He believed in an eternal, single and immutable God who acted as a universal substance existing in and for himself. All that existed outside God was rooted in God. The divine origin was eternal and immutable. The emergence of things was linked with their creation by God. At the moment of creation, God first conceived of things, his thoughts being the first images of things that were later created according to those images. Here God acted as an artist, creating his works according to his intention. The ideal being of things in God's mind was eternal, whereas their real being (being outside of God) was temporary, transient. On the basis of this system of being, Saint Anselm maintained that general ideas (universals) should exist prior to particular things. Particular material things were secondary, insofar as they were begotten by ideas, and eventually God.

The medieval philosopher-nominalist Roscelin (c. 1050-c. 1112) vigorously opposed this view. He insisted that the universal was not prior to sen-

suous things, did not underlie them. Moreover, it did not exist at all. General ideas, said Roscelin, were nothing but words, names given by man to particular things. Only particular things existed in reality.

Rejecting the existence of the general, of universal ideas, Roscelin tried to refute religious beliefs in a single God and the Trinity. He believed that God and the Trinity (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost), through which the former allegedly expressed himself, could not possibly exist. If those three persons existed, then there should be three independent gods, rather than one. This declaration angered the Church and was condemned as contrary to the ecclesiastical doctrine.

Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), the Italian theologian and philosopher, attempted to reconcile the extreme judgements made by realists and nominalists concerning the correlation between the universal and the particular. He believed that the prime cause of all that existed was God–the absolute and perfect spiritual being. God contained in himself, as general ideas, all that existed in the world, and created material things according to these ideas. Thus, Thomas Aquinas agreed with the realists who maintained that general ideas existed in God's mind prior to particular things. At the same time, he tried to prove the nominalists right too, when he said that, if we took general ideas that existed in the human, rather than God's mind, we could affirm that these ideas could not exist prior to particular things, they could not engender them, they were created by man

himself in the process of cognising the outside world.

Thomas Aquinas tried to substantiate theoretically the subservient role of philosophy in relation to theology. In his view, philosophy served the same purpose as theology, i.e., to substantiate religious dogmas, though by other means. Theology came to these dogmas directly from God, whereas philosophy did so from God's creations–material things.

Thomas' teaching is being revived and propagated in many Western countries now as neothomism. Its main objective is to reconcile philosophy and the special sciences with religion, with theology and to make them serve the latter.

4. The Materialism of the 17th and 18th Centuries and Its Struggle Against Religion and Idealism

A new age–the age of Renaissance –came to replace the Middle Ages, which were overwhelmingly dominated by sterile scholasticism confined to narrow religious dogmas. The emergence and development of capitalist relations of production stimulated the development of industry and commerce. This required concrete knowledge of the laws governing the development and functioning of the phenomena of the surrounding world. A need arose for studying and understanding the laws of nature. The human mind began taking an interest in nature, in man's material

activities. This tendency naturally affected the development of philosophy which was declared a science called upon to establish truths that would help in practical activities and direct the efforts to create material values.

The general propositions used by medieval philosophy and its method were judged false and misleading. New ways of investigation and new methods of cognising the truth were advanced. Francis Bacon (1561-1625) was the founder of this trend.

First and foremost, Bacon severely criticised idealist philosophy–from ancient times to the Middle Ages. He attacked it on two fronts. First, he blamed the idealists for confusing the holy and the human, and for going as far as to base their philosophical doctrines on the Holy Writ. Bacon held that sciences and philosophy should use a specific method in the experiments and base themselves on experience, whereas theology was based exclusively on belief. Hence the conclusion: theology and philosophy should not be confused, they should not interfere with each other.

Second, he criticised the idealists, especially the scholastics, for their speculative arguments, for the emptiness and sterility of their propositions and for the fruitlessness of their teaching.

Bacon considered experiment to be the foundation of knowledge. He set himself the task of relieving men and their consciousness of the prejudice that misled and confused men and obstructed the road to the knowledge of the truth.

All things, according to Bacon, were based on simple "natures" deduced from forms. The forms were limited in number, but their numerous combinations engendered the diverse phenomena occurring in the world. The material world, Bacon said, had neither a beginning nor an end, it had existed and would exist for ever. "Nothing is produced from nothing," he wrote. "Nothing is reduced to nothing. . . ." All the quantity of matter or its sum remains constant and neither increases, nor decreases.[1]

Bacon considered motion to be one of the basic properties of eternally existing matter, although he confined motion to 19 forms. This was undoubtedly a defect in his teaching.

Bacon's method of cognition is also tinged with metaphysics. He thought that, in the process of acquiring knowledge, it was necessary to split an object into separate aspects, qualities (natures) and to further break each quality down into still simpler qualities (natures), proceeding in this manner until the simplest natures are singled out. Then we should discover the laws or forms that determine the essence of these simplest natures, and see how these natures combine into a specific thing. As a result, Bacon believed, we can cognise any thing in the surrounding world.

Bacon did not understand that objects are not just mechanical combinations of certain perma-

[1] See Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum*, Book II, London, n.d., Ch. I, p. 150, Ch. V, p. 156, Ch. IV, p. 153 Ch. XL, p. 262.

nent qualities, but are integral wholes, in which qualities or aspects are interconnected and change into one another. Therefore an object cannot be cognised through a mechanical combination of knowledge about its separate aspects.

Notwithstanding the shortcomings inherent in Bacon's philosophy, it was an appreciable step forward in the development of philosophical thought and marked the emergence of a new form of philosophical materialism.

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), the English bourgeois philosopher, developed Bacon's materialist teaching. As Marx put it, Hobbes was the systematiser of Bacon's philosophy. He lent Bacon's views an explicit mechanistic shading. He stripped nature (matter) of the variety of qualities (ascribed to it by Bacon). Hobbes believed it to be a totality of bodies possessing only two main properties–extension and figure. He held the same view of motion, reducing its multiformity to one form–mechanical. By motion he understood only the travel of bodies in space.

In Hobbes' view, knowledge was an addition and subtraction of separate thoughts. He believed that a mathematical method based on addition and subtraction could be the sole scientific method of acquiring knowledge.

Hobbes developed his materialist world outlook fighting against religion and drawing atheistic conclusions from his philosophy. He held that religion was the outcome of people's ignorance and their fear of the unknown future. It had nothing to do with science, though he maintained

that it was needed because it helped to keep people in order.

Just like Bacon and Hobbes, representatives of the 17th-century bourgeoisie in England, so René Descartes (1596-1650) in France came out with a substantiation of new methods of cognising reality. He drew a materialist picture of the world. Nature, he said, consisted of small material particles of different sizes, forms and directions of motion. The entire necessary variety of objects emerged without God's interference in a natural manner from the three different types of primary elements that initially made up the boundless Universe–the fire-like, the air-like, and the soil-like. All these elements were in motion and formed whirlwinds. The whirlwind motion of the first type of element caused the emergence of the Sun and the stars; of the second type–the sky; and of the third type–the Earth and the other planets.

This naive, but basically materialist view of the origin of the solar system was directed against the religious dogma about the creation of the world by God in six days, and was thus progressive for its time.

In developing his view of the world, Descartes, in contrast to medieval scholasticism, attempted to rely on science. But at that time only mechanics and mathematics had been developed appreciably. This inevitably left an imprint on Descartes' teaching, making it rather mechanistic. Like Hobbes, Descartes deprived matter of its qualitative variety and, in fact, reduced it to bare numbers. Specifically, he did not see the qualitative difference be-

tween living organisms and inanimate objects. Animals, in his view, were simple machines, and man was a similar machine, though more complex. Like Hobbes, Descartes reduced all the variety of the forms of matter's motion to one–the travel of bodies in space.

Descartes was not a consistent materialist. He only held materialist views on matters relating to certain natural phenomena. But as soon as he passed on to the basic principles of being and knowledge, he turned away from materialism and approached philosophical problems from the premise that God was the only basis of being. He said, for instance, that "God ... has in principle created matter together with motion and rest"[1] and that there were two independent substances in the world–spiritual and material. All this made the philosophy of Descartes dualist, as distinct from those of Bacon and Hobbes which were monistic.

Contrary to the 17th-century English materialists, who developed the theory and method of cognition on the basis of experience and sense perceptions, Descartes always proceeded from pure reason. He did not believe that experience had an important part to play in the process of cognition, and thought that, in cognising the world, one

[1] "Et generalem quod attinet, manifestum, mihi videtur illam non iliam esse, quam Deum ipsum, qui materiam simul cum motu et quiete in principio creavit..." (Descartes, *Principia philosophiae*, Paris, 1905, Part II, p. 61).

should rely exclusively on one's mind and be guided by its principles and ideas, which were innate.

The Dutch materialist philosopher Spinoza (1632-1677) overcame some of the drawbacks inherent in the Cartesian teachings, such as dualism. Spinoza believed that the world was one by nature and that this nature was substance. As regards thinking, it was only an attribute (intrinsic quality) of matter, alongside its other attributes, such as extension. Nature was eternal, it had never been created by anybody. The reason for its eternal and infinite existence was concealed in Nature itself. Being eternal, Nature (substance) manifested itself through its modi (qualities or states) which were innumerable. One of those modi was motion which, as distinct from the other modi, was infinite, rather than finite, i.e. characteristic of all the states of substance (Nature).

By declaring the world the cause of itself (*causa sui*), Spinoza removed God as its creator and dissolved him in Nature.

Spinoza held that people's ignorance and fear of the future had given rise to religion which, he wrote, was nothing "but the fantasy and ravings of a timid soul".[1]

Like the materialist views advanced by his predecessors, Spinoza's theory has some weak points typical of metaphysical materialism. Spinoza reduced all forms of motion to one–the travel of bodies in space–and even thought motion to be a

[1] Spinoza, *Oeuvres*, Vol. II, Paris, 1861, p. 5 (Préface au Traité théologico-politique).

property of matter's finite states, rather than an intrinsic attribute of it. Moreover, he was unable to give a satisfactory answer to the question of the correlation between sense and rational knowledge, being unaware of the significance of experience or practice. Lastly, he was a hylozoist–he believed consciousness to be a universal property of Nature, i.e. he thought that animals and even inanimate objects also possessed consciousness, just as men did.

The materialist theories outlined above expressed the interests of the historically progressive 17th-century bourgeoisie. 17th-century materialism was the world outlook of the bourgeoisie, which fought feudalism for political power. But as soon as the bourgeoisie came to power and established its dictatorship, it began to abandon materialism and lean towards idealism–the theoretical basis of religion. The bourgeoisie began to resort to religion as a means of ideologically suppressing the working people and justifying its own rule.

The bourgeoisie took power in England at the end of the 17th century. It was not by mere chance, therefore, that idealist systems spearheaded against materialism and defending religion began to emerge in England at the beginning of the 18th century. One of the first and most important was the philosophy of subjective idealism developed by Bishop George Berkeley (1684-1753).

Berkeley believed that man dealt only with particular things and phenomena perceived by him as different totalities of various sensations–of a certain form, colour, taste, smell, etc. If we discard

these sensations, Berkeley reasoned, the object would disappear together with them. It followed therefore, he concluded, that only sensations existed in reality. There was not nor could there be anything apart from or above them. He wrote: "I see this cherry, I feel it, I taste it: and I am sure *nothing* cannot be seen, or felt, or tasted: it is therefore *real.* Take away the sensations of softness, moisture, redness, tartness, and you take away the *cherry.* Since it is not a being distinct from sensations; a cherry, I say, is nothing but a congeries of sensible impressions, or ideas perceived by various senses: which ideas are united into one thing (or have one name given them) by the mind; because they are observed to attend each other."[1] If this is so, if only particular things exist, the things which are the totalities of man's sensations, then, Berkeley continues, matter is nothing but a pure invention of the materialists. It does not exist in reality. It was invented, Berkeley argues, by materialists to enable them to construct various atheistic systems and to oppose religion. But if matter does not exist, if it is an empty word, a pure invention, then materialism is refuted since matter is the basic principle of the materialist teaching and plays a major role in it.

This was how Berkeley tried to refute materialism and substantiate the idealist system of the world proceeding exclusively from the reality of sensations.

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[1] George Berkeley, *The Works,* Vol. I, London, 1908, p. 383.

If, however, only man's sensations exist, and all that surrounds him is nothing but various complexes of his sensations, then other people are also mere complexes of sensations rather then real beings, and the whole world is bound to disappear when the subject dies. Yet no sensible person will question the real existence of the people around him or believe that the whole world disappears after one man's death. Berkeley's reasoning contradicts the common sense on which he tried to rely. If Berkeley had been consistent in his arguments, he would inevitably have arrived at the above conclusion and contradiction. But he himself betrayed his own principle by saying that when there was no one to perceive a particular thing, the latter did not disappear because it was perceived by God. Generally, he said, all sensations experienced by men were caused by God, by His action on man's soul. Thus, Berkeley shifts from subjective to objective idealism and comes out in an open defence of religion and the existence of God whom he regards–as did the earlier medieval idealists–as the creator of the world.

The attempts made by Berkeley and other idealists to check the development and propagation of materialist views were not really successful. Materialism was advancing further, while its struggle against idealism and religion was becoming ever more acute. It was especially intense in France, where materialism was still a spiritual weapon in the hands of the ideologists of the revolutionary bourgeoisie fighting against feudal relations and the church.

The French materialists criticised religion and the clergy more harshly, vehemently and consistently than their predecessors did. Their brilliant atheistic works are still relevant today.

Materialism in France was represented by Paul Holbach, Denis Diderot, Claude Helvétius, Julien La Mettrie, and others.

The French materialist philosophers advanced the 17th-century mechanistic materialism of Bacon, Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, etc.

The French materialists gave a more consistent and profound answer to the fundamental question of philosophy and overcame the theological deviations typical in varying degrees of their predecessors. Specifically, there was no room in their philosophical systems for God either as creator (even if He gave only the first impetus) or as observer. They declared openly and clearly that nature existed objectively and eternally and did not need God at all. Nature, said the French materialists, is the sum-total of various combinations of tiny particles of matter–atoms and molecules–which possess extension, weight, figure, motion and other properties.

The interconnection between matter and motion was studied by the French materialists more thoroughly than by the 17th-century materialists. Although by motion they understood, primarily, the travel of bodies in space, they considered it (motion) an attribute (fundamental property) of matter stemming from its inner nature. Holbach, for instance, wrote: "... matter moves by its own forces and does not need any external impulse to

set it in motion...."[1] He continued: "...without motion we cannot conceive of nature...".[2]

Though they were quite correct in assuming that motion was related to the inherent nature of matter, the French materialists were still unable to establish the source and cause of motion. Neither did they see the multiplicity of the forms of motion nor the development of nature as a transition from lower to higher stages, and did not believe in the existence of leaps.

As regards the theory of knowledge, the French materialists came out resolutely against the theory of innate ideas and principles, advanced by Descartes. They believed that all men's ideas and notions formed in the process of cognition, on the basis of experience. In contrast to Spinoza, they attached priority to sense knowledge, sensations, which they regarded as the only source of knowledge. The French materialists were right in that respect, but they assigned an inadequate role to thought, though they held it necessary for cognising truth. In a word, the French materialists had not yet overcome the one-sided approach to the correlation between sense knowledge and thinking that had been characteristic of their predecessors' views.

A sizable contribution to the development of 18th-century materialist philosophy was made by the Russian thinkers, notably Mikhail Lomonosov

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[1] P. H. Holbach, *Système de la nature*, Londres, 1793, Première Partie, p. 23.

[2] *Ibid.*, Seconde Partie, p. 156.

(1711-1765) and Alexander Radishchev (1749-1802).

Lomonosov approached the fundamental question of philosophy from a materialist point of view and thought all bodies and phenomena to be material in their essence. Matter is composed of atoms which combine into molecules ("corpuscles"), the latter making up all "sensuous things". Lomonosov was the first to prove in a natural-scientific way the eternity and indestructibility of matter and motion, when he discovered the law of the conservation of matter and motion. He formulated it as follows: "...all changes in nature occur in such a way that whatever is added to something is at the same time subtracted from something else.... This law of nature is universal to such an extent that it covers the rules of motion as well."[1]

Lomonosov stressed that matter and motion were inseparable and that matter was in a constant state of motion. Like all the other representatives of mechanistic materialism, he reduced motion to the travel of bodies in space and divided motion into types–external, when a body changes its position in relation to another body, and internal, when the particles making up a particular body change their position.

Lomonosov believed that matter possessed an infinite multitude of properties.

According to Lomonosov, the world is knowable

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[1] M. V. Lomonosov, *Selected Philosophical Works*, Moscow, 1950, p. 160 (in Russian).

through the direct perception of objects and phenomena by the sense organs and the subsequent treatment of the sense data in the course of theoretical thinking. Lomonosov attached equal importance both to experiment and to theoretical thinking, insisting that truth could be cognised only if the two were closely interconnected. He wrote: "To establish a theory from observations and to correct the observations through the theory is the best way of all to establish the truth."[1]

Lomonosov's materialist views have another major merit–his philosophical propositions were always closely linked with the evidence of natural science and research into specific fields of nature.

Radishchev followed Lomonosov's materialist line in Russian philosophy at the end of the 18th century. He also proved that the world was material and considered matter to be a totality of all substances. Radishchev singled out motion among other properties of eternally existing matter (such as extension, for example) as one of its basic attributes. True, in this respect Radishchev did not go farther than his contemporaries–the French materialist philosophers.

Like Lomonosov, he believed that the world was knowable and thought sensuous experience to be the source of knowledge. At the same time, he considered thought activity very important in cognising the surrounding world and maintained that genuine knowledge was possible only when sense perception and thinking were combined.

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 330.

Radishchev was a revolutionary nobleman who actively opposed serfdom and autocracy and supported the revolutionary emancipation of the serfs.

Summing up the materialist views of the 17th-18th-century philosophers, it is easy to see that they were all to some extent metaphysical, i.e. they rejected development, qualitative distinctions, and contradiction in nature, and supported mechanism by reducing the variety of the forms of motion to a mechanical form (the travel of bodies in space) and by explaining the multitude of qualitative distinctions by the laws of mechanics. Naturally, this was largely the result of the level of development of the natural sciences. At that time only astronomy and physics (mainly mechanics) were fairly well developed.

5. Classical German Philosophy at the End of the 18th and in the First Half of the 19th Centuries

In contrast to England, France and other countries where bourgeois revolutions destroyed or greatly undermined feudal relations and paved the way for the development of capitalism, in Germany feudal relations were still predominant in the period under discussion. Germany was a backward country broken up into numerous separate principalities. The bourgeoisie had not yet emerged as a class and was weak economically and dependent politically. Unable to wage an independent struggle for power, it was afraid of revolution and

willingly made compromises with feudal lords.

This uncertain and dependent position of the German bourgeoisie inevitably influenced the philosophical systems developed and propagated by its ideologists. They concentrated mainly on various abstract problems, rather than on seeking ways to solve practical matters, in which the bourgeoisie was helpless. True, these philosophical systems were to a certain degree influenced by the French bourgeois revolution and by the advances of the natural sciences. As a result, a living and fertile dialectics—a major achievement of the classical German idealist philosophy—could be discerned through abstract, artificial and contradictory systems.

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) was the founder of the classical German philosophy. Initially Kant studied natural science and sought solutions to its problems from a materialist standpoint. For instance, he developed a hypothesis that the solar system had emerged from a gas nebula as a result of the action of its inner natural forces.

This Kantian hypothesis was prominent in the struggle against the metaphysical way of thinking, which held sway at that time. As Engels put it, it made the first breach in the building of metaphysics.

In subsequent years, however, when Kant engaged in purely philosophical problems, such as the theory of knowledge, he switched from spontaneous materialism to idealism, though he was not a thoroughly consistent idealist. The essence of Kant's philosophy was as follows.

Kant did not reject the objective existence of matter, but considered it unknowable by nature, calling it a "thing-in-itself". Alongside matter (objective reality), there exists, Kant believed, a world of phenomena, which he called nature–the world we perceive, in which we live and act. The world of phenomena, or nature, does not exist independently of human consciousness, it emerges as a result of the "thing-in-itself" acting upon the sense organs and is nothing but the totality of men's notions. "All bodies," Kant wrote, "together with the space they occupy should be considered as simple notions in ourselves and do not exist anywhere except in our thought."[1]

The world of phenomena created by man in no way resembles, according to Kant, the world of "things-in-themselves". Yet man deals only with the world of phenomena. If this is so, the world of "things-in-themselves" is absolutely inaccessible for him. Man does not and cannot know anything about this world, because it is unknowable. All that man knows, Kant concluded, is related to the world of phenomena, i.e. to his own notions.

The world of phenomena, Kant maintained, is orderless and chaotic; it is not regulated by any law or necessity; it exists outside of space and time. It is man who introduces, in the process of cognition, a certain measure of order into this chaos–he places all phenomena within space and time limitations, lends them necessity, regularity, and a cause-and-effect relationship. It follows then

[1] Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena*, 1888, S. 67.

that man creates both the world of phenomena (since the latter, Kant said, is only a totality of man's sensations or notions) and the laws acting in this world. This is a clearly idealistic solution to the problem of the relationship between man's consciousness and nature. Kant, however, is not consistent in this view. By admitting that the objective reality ("thing-in-itself") exists independently of consciousness, he tries to combine materialist and idealist principles into one system and to reconcile materialism with idealism. Lenin pinpointed this inconsistency in Kant's philosophy. He wrote: "The principal feature of Kant's philosophy is the reconciliation of materialism with idealism, a compromise between the two, the combination within one system of heterogeneous and contrary philosophical trends. When Kant assumes that something outside us, a thing-in-itself, corresponds to our ideas, he is a materialist. When he declares this thing-in-itself to be unknowable, transcendental, other-sided, he is an idealist."[1]

In Kant's dualistic philosophy, however, the materialist and idealist trends do not hold an equal place, with idealism gaining the upper hand. It is not a mere coincidence, therefore, that Kant's teaching was subordinated to a rather limited and reactionary objective–to justify religion. It was for this reason, Kant conceded, that he had to narrow the field of knowledge.

Indeed, according to Kant, man deals exclusively with the world of phenomena and is unable to

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 198.

grasp the world of "things-in-themselves". The latter, as Kant saw it, is the realm of God, soul, free will, etc. So science is unable and has no right to judge of God, soul, etc. (to prove, for instance, that God does not exist, or that the soul is mortal), since all this is inaccessible for it. It is only religion, Kant insists, that can penetrate the world of "things-in-themselves", break away from the observed world of phenomena and take a look at the other world, since religion unites man with God, grants him free will in the other world, and liberates him from all the hardships he constantly suffers in the sensuous world.

The idealist philosophy was further advanced by Hegel (1770-1831), the great German idealist philosopher, the founder of idealist dialectics.

According to Hegel, all that exists originated from pure thought or the Absolute Idea. Initially, it is "pure being", i.e. devoid of any content and equivalent to "nothing" or non-being. Then, "pure being" and "nothing" (non-being) engage in a struggle with one another and produce a new concept–"becoming". The latter leads to the emergence of yet another concept–"being there", and the process goes on. The Absolute Idea is inherently contradictory, so it constantly develops, giving rise to ever new concepts, which are fuller in content. This will continue until the Absolute Idea exhausts itself, revealing all its content. Having revealed and fully expressed its content in various concepts, the Absolute Idea begets nature, assumes a material shell and henceforth exists as material objects and phenomena, i.e. Nature.

Here, the Absolute Idea initially takes the form of mechanical forces, then of chemical compounds, and, finally, begets life and then man and human society. With the emergence of man, the Idea breaks through the material shell which is "alien" to it, and begins to exist in its own form, the form of men's consciousness or thought. As human consciousness develops, the Idea liberates itself increasingly from the fetters of matter. Finally, having realised all its past experience, the Idea ends its development in Hegelian philosophy and returns, as it were, to itself, to its original state, but now not as pure being, but as the being which has revealed and apprehended its content to the full.

As regards knowledge, the full content of the Absolute Idea–or the Absolute Spirit, as Hegel calls his Absolute Idea–should be represented at this final stage of its development by the Hegelian philosophical system. The process of cognition ends with the formulation of this system, because there remains nothing that is not cognised. Hegelian philosophy, according to Hegel, expresses the absolute knowledge, knowledge consummated once and for all, the absolute truth.

In practice, the Absolute Spirit should have been represented by the Prussian limited monarchy which, as Engels put it, Frederick William III so vehemently and vainly promised his subjects.

All this shows Hegelian philosophy as a vivid example of objective idealism arguing that consciousness or spirit is primary, while nature is secondary, being a derivative of consciousness. Besides, this philosophy overtly justifies and theo-

retically substantiates the eternity of the existing order, monarchy, nobility, and the regime that suppresses the working people.

Yet, there is another aspect to Hegelian philosophy–the dialectical method, the fundamental principles of which were set forth by Hegel within his rather conservative and artificial system.

By developing his system and showing how the Absolute Idea engenders its content, and then the material world–nature and society–Hegel, first, gave a picture of the developing world and, second, offered a universal description of the content of the fundamental laws of dialectics. He showed, among other things, that the world developed through the struggle of opposites and that, in the course of that development, some concepts were negated by others and repeated on a higher level.

In the dialectic of concepts and their interconnection and mutual transitions, Hegel guessed at and expressed the real dialectic–the dialectic of things. True, as often as not Hegel was inconsistent in pursuing a particular dialectical principle, especially when dealing with reality, which he had to justify because of his class affiliation. The inconsistency of the Hegelian dialectic stemmed, to a considerable extent, from the fact that it was developed within the framework of an idealist system and was tailored to its needs, which were incompatible with the revolutionary spirit of genuine dialectics and contrary to its principles. Seeking to satisfy the needs of his system, Hegel was therefore compelled to go against his own dialectical method.

Let us consider some deviations from the principles of dialectics, caused by the contradiction between the method and the system in Hegelian philosophy.

1. The dialectical method sees nature, society, and knowledge in a constant state of motion and development. The system, on the other hand, calls for a limit in development. Hegel yields to the system and says that development ceases as soon as the Idea reaches its highest stage.

2. The dialectical method recognises that contradictions are universal. The system requires that all contradictions should be settled and an ideal, conflict-free state be established. Hegel finds himself on the side of the system and gives up his method when he declares that as soon as the Idea reaches its highest stage (the Prussian limited monarchy, on the one hand, and the Hegelian idealist philosophy, on the other) all contradictions are resolved and the absolutely true situation is established.

3. The method requires that thought should develop in conformity with real processes. The system, on the other hand, assumes that relations are constructed in the head if the existing relations and connections do not correspond to some provision of the system. Here, too, Hegel gives preference to the system and constructs various artificial connections instead of coordinating his philosophy with reality.

4. The method requires continuous changes in reality and shows how and in what direction they are to be made, whereas the system demands that

the existing order should be perpetuated. Hegel falls victim to his own system and deprives his method of any practical value by relating it only to the past, and by making it a method of cognition of past things and phenomena.

Only materialism based on science and requiring the world to be taken as it is, without any outside additions, could serve as a spring-board for overcoming the above deficiences in the Hegelian method and for developing it further. The subsequent development of philosophy objectively demanded, therefore, a shift to materialism and a critical materialist reassessment of the Hegelian idealist philosophy.

The German philosopher Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-1872) accomplished, though only partially, this historic mission. True, he did not re-examine Hegel's dialectical principles from the materialist standpoint. He confined his mission to revolting against Hegel's idealism, rejecting it, and reinstating materialism. It was Marx and Engels who peeled the husk of Hegelian idealism off the rational grain–dialectics–and developed it on the basis of materialism.

Feuerbach showed that the Hegelian Absolute Idea was but the human mind, separated from its bearer–man–and transformed into an independent being that created the world out of itself. He said that the role played by the Absolute Idea in Hegelian philosophy was played by God in theology. So the Absolute Idea in no way differed from God, while Hegelianism was but a variety of theology. "*He who does not reject the Hegelian philosophy,*"

Feuerbach wrote, *"neither rejects theology.* The Hegelian teaching that nature, reality is posited by the idea is merely a *rational* expression of the theological precept that nature has been created by God. . . ."[1]

According to Feuerbach, thinking cannot exist outside or independently of man, being a property of man's brain and its function that inherently links the spiritual and the material. Hence thinking (the ideal, spiritual) is not primary, as Hegel believed, but secondary to matter, to nature.

In contrast to Hegel, who made abstract spirit the subject of his philosophy, Feuerbach bases his system on man and nature, regarding man as an integral part of the nature that produced him. He makes anthropology (from the Greek *anthropos*– man) a guiding, basic principle in developing his materialist views. "The new philosophy," he wrote referring to his philosophical system, "makes *man, including nature* as the basis of man, *the only, universal and supreme* subject of philosophy."[2]

While being guided by his anthropological principle and correctly stressing (in contrast to Hegel) that man is part of nature, while his consciousness (thinking) is an attribute of it, Feuerbach overlooked one important point. He did not realise that man, being part of nature, was at the same time a product of social life, and that his consciousness

[1] Ludwig Feuerbach, *Philosophische Kritiken und Grundsätze (1839-1846)*, Leipzig, 1969, S. 185.
[2] *Ibid.*, S. 269.

was shaped not only by the physiological processes occurring in his body, particularly in his brain, but also by the social environment within which man lived and acted, and by the material conditions of his life. So no matter how vigorously Feuerbach insisted on man being "alive" and "sensuous", and inherently linked with nature, that man was abstract and isolated from the concrete conditions of life, and deprived of his social (human) essence.

Giving the materialist answer to the question of what is primary–matter or consciousness–Feuerbach also correctly treated the other aspect of the fundamental question of philosophy. He supported the view that the world is knowable and castigated Kant's agnosticism.

Feuerbach believed sensations to be the point of departure in the process of cognition, providing man with all the data related to objective reality. Yet man feels and thinks simultaneously. Thinking supplements man's sensations, and is always present at the stage of sense knowledge, making coherent that which the senses perceive separately.

This proves that Feuerbach realised the inherent interconnection between sensations and thinking, between the sensuous and the rational.

It is to Feuerbach's credit that he unflaggingly opposed religion and comprehensively criticised it. He showed that God had nothing supernatural about him and had been invented by men in their own image. According to Feuerbach, men, who are able to think and imagine in abstract terms, separated themselves from their own essence which

they began to imagine as a special independent and supernatural being–God.

By demonstrating that all the features ascribed to God are human and belong to individuals or the human race as a whole, Feuerbach revealed the earthly roots of religion and brought God from heaven down to earth.

Although Feuerbach tore the supernatural mask from God, he did not realise the class essence of religion and did not expose the social causes of the belief in God and life after death. It is not fortuitous, therefore, that he was unable to point out any effective way of combatting religion. Moreover, he was not against all religion. He opposed only the traditional religion that regarded God as a supernatural creature. At the same time, he laboriously proved the need for a new, earthly religion in which man himself would take God's place and man's love of man would be the guiding principle.

Irrespective of the many drawbacks inherent in Feuerbach's philosophy, it undoubtedly deserves praise for reinstating the principles of materialism (though on the old metaphysical basis and without dialectics, which he rejected together with Hegelian idealism) and for having greatly influenced the subsequent development of philosophy. The fact that Feuerbach's materialist teaching was one of the theoretical sources of Marxism is in itself a graphic illustration of the role it played in the advancement of philosophical thought.

6. The Philosophy of 19th-Century Russian Revolutionary Democrats

As shown above, Feuerbach reinstated materialism, but his was a metaphysical materialism.

Many shortcomings of the metaphysical materialism were surmounted by the Russian revolutionary democrats, who set forth their philosophical views in the early 1840s and developed them for several decades.

This was the time when a peasant, bourgeois-democratic revolution spearheaded against serfdom and tsarism was maturing in Russia. The revolutionary democrats Vissarion Belinsky (1811-1848), Alexander Herzen (1812–1870), Nikolai Chernyshevsky (1828-1889), Nikolai Dobrolyubov (1836-1861), and others were the ideologists of the forthcoming revolution.

Having realised the necessity of changing the existing social order and the righteousness of the demands put forward by the people, especially the peasants, the Russian revolutionary democrats sided decisively with the peasants, the common people, and began to substantiate in their philosophical theories the imperative need to liberate the peasants from serfdom.

In developing their philosophical views, the Russian revolutionary democrats proceeded both from materialist philosophy of their predecessors in Russia (Lomonosov and Radishchev) and from Hegel's dialectic and Feuerbach's materialism. At the same time, they generalised to a certain extent

the advances made by natural sciences at the time.

In contrast to Feuerbach, the Russian revolutionary democrats did not discard Hegel's dialectic–though they did criticise Hegelianism–but tried to combine it with materialism and give it a materialist interpretation.

Herzen was one of the first Russian revolutionary democrats who attacked Hegel's philosophy. Though Herzen highly appraised Hegel's dialectic, which gave a general description of the laws governing the motion and development of nature and thought, he criticised Hegel for abstracting himself from reality, and for his idealism. Hegel, Herzen wrote, "sacrifices all the temporary, all the existing for the thought and the spirit; the idealism which brought him up and which he imbibed with his mother's milk carries him away to one-sidedness. . . , he tries to suppress nature by spirit, logic; he is ready to consider any particular manifestation of it a ghost. . . ." The Hegelian "pure being is an abyss which has engulfed all the definitions of real being. . . . One should not think, however, that real being emerges indeed from pure being–does the existing individual arise from the concept of genus?"[1]

Herzen believed that the material things that together make up nature existed in reality, not pure being. As regards spirit and thought, Herzen wrote, they are the result of the development of

[1] A. I. Herzen, *Selected Philosophical Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1948, pp. 120, 150 (in Russian).

nature, a property of material entities that have reached a certain stage in their development.

The Russian revolutionary democrats held that reality possessed an infinite multitude of properties and was in a state of constant and ceaseless motion and development. Herzen wrote: "The life of nature is a ceaseless development. . . ."[1] Belinsky wrote in the same vein: "There is no limit to the development of humanity. . . . Mankind will never say to itself: *'Stop, enough, there is nowhere to go.'*"[2]

The struggle of opposites and the transformation of opposites into each other, the Russian revolutionary democrats maintained, is the source of development. This is the essence of life and truth, they said. "All the living," Herzen wrote, "is alive and true only as one whole, as the internal and external, as the general and the individual, i.e. the co-existing. Life binds these elements together; life is a process of their eternal transformation into each other."[3] Belinsky expressed the same idea: ". . .Living truth consists in the unity of opposites."[4]

The Russian revolutionary democrats also realised that, in the course of the motion and deve-

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[1] A. I. Herzen, *Selected Philosophical Works*, vol. 1, p. 127.

[2] V. G. Belinsky, *Selected Philosophical Works*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1948, p. 146 (in Russian).

[3] A. I. Herzen, *Selected Philosophical Works*, Vol. 1, p. 61.

[4] V. G. Belinsky, *Selected Philosophical Works*, Vol. I, p. 468.

lopment of nature, quantity turns into quality engendering something new, which differs from that which existed before. To illustrate how this law operates, Chernyshevsky, for instance, wrote: "... the combination of a known proportion of oxygen and hydrogen makes water, which possesses a multitude of qualities that are not discernible either in oxygen or in hydrogen."[1]

Finally, the Russian revolutionary democrats, Chernyshevsky in particular, gave a thorough description of the operation in nature and society of the law of the negation of negation, ensuring continuous change, a rejection of some forms by others and repetition of old forms on a higher level.

Thus, the Russian revolutionary democrats largely got rid of mechanism and metaphysics, and made a step forward in combining dialectics and materialism and in giving a materialist interpretation and substantiation to dialectics.

It was also to the credit of the Russian revolutionary democrats that they vigorously opposed agnosticism, which sought to raise an insurmountable wall between consciousness and reality and declared reality to be unknowable.

Referring to the life of man and to his experience, Chernyshevsky refuted agnosticism and proved that the world was knowable and that our sense perceptions correctly reflected reality.

In comparison with Feuerbach and his predecessors, the Russian revolutionary democrats were

[1] N. G. Chernyshevsky, *Selected Philosophical Works*, Vol. III, Moscow, 1951, p. 190 (in Russian).

a step closer to overcoming the contemplativeness of philosophical theories. They aspired to the transformation of the world. Herzen, for instance, considered dialectics to be, as Lenin put it, "the algebra of revolution".

As regards their views of society, the Russian revolutionary democrats were idealists, just like their West-European predecessors and contemporaries, although they did make some materialist pronouncements on the subject.

Chapter III

THE REVOLUTIONARY UPHEAVAL IN PHILOSOPHY MADE BY MARXISM

1. The Conditions for the Emergence of Marxist Philosophy

a) Socio-Economic Conditions

The emergence of Marxist philosophy was a necessary outcome of the development of society and science. The philosophy of Marxism expresses the interests of the proletariat, and therefore arises at a stage in social development when the working people become an independent social force struggling to change the conditions of life.

Initially, the proletariat's class struggle was spontaneous, taking the form of isolated actions against individual capitalists. Later, however, it became more conscious and purposeful. As the struggle gained momentum, the proletariat began to organise and unite, to realise its general class interests, and to take action against the bourgeoisie as a class, against capitalism as a social system, rather than against individual members of the bourgeoisie. The 1830s and 1840s witnessed the first mass actions by the working class, such as the revolt of the Lyons weavers in France (1831), the revolutionary actions of the Parisian workers (1832), the uprising of Silesian weavers in Germany (1844), and the Chartist movement in England (1830-1840).

As the class struggle against the bourgeoisie intensified, the need arose to substantiate theoretically the necessity and possibility of overthrowing the existing social and political system and to develop a theory indicating the social relations and institutions to replace the existing ones. This historical need was behind the emergence of Marxist philosophy–a unique world outlook guiding the proletariat in its struggle for a new society and constituting for it a method for the revolutionary remaking of reality.

b) Natural-Scientific Conditions

Although the proletariat's need for dialectical and historical materialism was a prerequisite for its emergence, this alone could hardly provide a sufficiently sound foundation for developing the Marxist philosophy. The utopian views advanced before Marxism and substantiating the necessity of passing to a new, ideal society had also been a response to the oppressed classes' need for changing their conditions of life. Yet they did not help those classes to evolve a correct understanding of the surrounding world and to find the ways of transforming reality, but rather obstructed this. The emergence of dialectical and historical materialism required a certain level of scientific knowledge, insofar as its content was a generalisation of scientific advances.

By the early 19th century, scientific knowledge had reached a level making it possible to substantiate the basic principles of dialectics theoretically

and to develop a scientific dialectico-materialist world view. By that time natural scientists began to study the inner processes of phenomena instead of merely describing and classifying them. They not only recorded the properties observed, but singled out the laws governing changes in these properties. New sciences developed, such as physiology studying processes in living organisms; embryology studying embryonic development; geology dealing with changes in the earth's crust; and others. A number of outstanding discoveries were made, which showed that natural processes were dialectical in character. The most important were: the discovery of the cellular structure of organisms (1838-1839), the substantiation of the law of conservation and transformation of energy (1842-1847), and Darwin's evolutionary theory of organisms (1859).

The discovery of the cell as the basic structural unit of the organism pointed to the unity of the organic world and to the general laws of development inherent in it. The law of conservation and transformation of energy revealed the inter-connection and mutual transformation of the various forms of the motion of matter. Darwin's evolutionary theory showed that the organic world constantly changes and develops and that existing species of animals and plants are the result of a long evolution.

The strides made by the natural sciences at the beginning and especially in the middle of the 19th century made it possible to formulate and substantiate the most important principles of dialectics

and to develop a consistent scientific world outlook, for the proletariat to use as a weapon for transforming existing reality.

c) Theoretical Conditions

The emergence of the Marxist philosophy was conditioned not only by social factors and the development of natural sciences, but also by the entire history of philosophical thought. Marxism absorbed and developed the progressive ideas put forward by earlier philosophers. This means that, besides the social and natural-scientific conditions for the development of Marxism, there were also theoretical conditions. Primarily, these relate to 19th-century German philosophy, the philosophical views advanced by Hegel and Feuerbach.

Hegel formulated the fundamental principles of dialectics and elaborated the dialectical method of cognition. Being an idealist, however, he visualised dialectics as the laws of the self-development of the pure idea existing outside and prior to the material world. As for the development of the material world–nature and society–it was for him "only a copy [*Abklatsch*] of the self-movement of the concept going on from eternity, no one knows where, but at all events independently of any thinking human brain. This ideological perversion had to be done away with."[1]

While criticising Hegel, Feuerbach did not no-

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, in three volumes, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, p. 362.

tice the rational grain in Hegel's philosophy–the dialectical method introduced and at the same time mystified by him. Feuerbach did not rectify Hegel's mistakes, "he simply threw him aside as useless. . . ."[1]

What Feuerbach was unable to do was done by the founders of dialectical and historical materialism. Proceeding from the materialist principles reinstated by Feuerbach, Marx and Engels comprehensively criticised Hegelian idealist philosophy. In the process, they singled out the major contribution of German classical philosophy–dialectics, separated it from mysticism and numerous artificial schemes and constructions, and developed it on a scientific materialist basis into dialectical and historical materialism, which is a consistently scientific world outlook and a general method for cognising and transforming the surrounding world.

2. The Substance of the Revolutionary Upheaval Made by Marx and Engels in Philosophy

Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Frederick Engels (1820-1895) were the founders of the new, consistently scientific philosophy–dialectical and historical materialism.

Initially, Marx and Engels were the followers of Hegel's idealist philosophy. But later, yielding to the pressure of social practice, particularly that of the class struggle of the working people against

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 361.

their exploiters (which they both witnessed when Marx worked as editor of *Rheinische Zeitung* and Engels as an employee in the enterprise of which his father was a shareholder), they abandoned their idealist views and took a materialist position. Engels, for instance, wrote at this time: "While I was in Manchester, it was tangibly brought home to me that the economic facts, which have so far played no role or only a contemptible one in the writing of history, are, at least in the modern world, a decisive historical force; that they form the basis of the origination of the present-day class antagonisms. . . ."[1]

Marx began to lean towards materialism in his *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law* (1843). It was here that he drew the conclusion that the key to understanding the process of mankind's historical development should be sought in "civil society", i.e. in the material, economic relations between people, rather than in a political field, or the state, as Hegel thought.

This tendency is especially explicit in *The Holy Family,* a work written jointly by Marx and Engels in 1845. It contains a thorough criticism of Hegel's idealism and the views of the Young Hegelians. The latter scorned the common people, regarding them as an "inert mass" incapable of creativeness and obstructing progress. They advanced critically-thinking personalities as the decisive creative force in history. Marx and Engels refuted these ideas and showed that the working

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works,* Vol. 3, p. 178.

people who create material wealth ensuring thereby the existence and development of society, are the decisive force behind historical progress. They stressed especially that the proletariat could and had to liberate itself by abolishing private ownership of the means of production and its corollary, the exploitation of man by man.

Marx and Engels developed the fundamental principles of dialectical materialism still further in another of their joint works, *The German Ideology*, written in 1845 and 1846, and Marx in his work, *The Poverty of Philosophy* (1847). A comprehensive account of the world outlook developed by Marx and Engels is given in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* written by them on the instructions of the Communist League and published in 1848. As Lenin put it, this work with the clarity and brilliance of genius outlines consistent materialism which embraces nature, society and dialectics, as the most comprehensive and profound doctrine of development.[1]

After 1848, too, Marx and Engels continued their work on the philosophical aspects of the scientific world outlook and the method of cognising and transforming the existing reality. Most relevant in this respect are *Capital* and *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* by Marx, and *Anti-Dühring, Dialectics of Nature*, and *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy* by Engels.

By developing dialectical and historical material-

[1] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 48.

ism, Marx and Engels made a revolutionary upheaval in philosophy. Their teaching differs fundamentally from all the philosophy that existed before them.

Indeed, the pre-Marxian materialist doctrines were predominantly mechanical. This was not fortuitous, since in the 18th century mechanics was the best developed of all the natural sciences. Chemistry, as Engels put it, existed only in its infantile form—the phlogiston theory still reigned supreme. Biology was also still in its infancy—the functioning of organisms was believed to be the result of purely mechanical causes. Man himself was seen through the prism of mechanical laws and considered to be a complex machine.[1] As the most advanced field of knowledge, mechanics left an imprint not only on other sciences, but on philosophy, too. The materialist philosophers of the time tried to explain the world, the reality surrounding them, exclusively on the basis of mechanical laws.

As distinct from pre-Marxian materialism, dialectical materialism is free from mechanism. In explaining the various phenomena taking place in reality, it does not proceed from the laws of mechanics only, but rather from the totality of laws, holding that mechanical laws make it possible to understand only the mechanical form of the motion of matter. As regards the other forms of motion, their essence is determined by specific laws

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[1] See K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 349.

inherent in each of them, rather than by the laws of mechanics.

Pre-Marxian materialism was metaphysical. It was unable to conceive of the world as a process, as developing historically. True, the philosophers of the day did recognise motion in the surrounding world, but they believed motion to proceed within a closed circle, repeating the same states. In contrast, dialectical materialism views the world as being in constant motion and development.

Pre-Marxian materialism was not consistent and comprehensive. The materialist philosophers of that time explained only natural phenomena materialistically. As regards social phenomena, they treated them idealistically and believed them to be dependent upon a certain ideal basis—political or legal consciousness, public opinion, ethics, science, and so forth. The founders of dialectical and historical materialism were the first to apply materialist principles to society and to draw the conclusion that the material conditions of life were primary and decisive in society. Ideal or spiritual phenomena, public consciousness, various views, theories, and the like were secondary, and stemmed from the material conditions of people's life, from their social being.

Another major feature of the pre-Marxian materialists was contemplativeness and isolation from people's revolutionary practical activities. They merely explained the world, whereas it had to be changed. Marxist philosophy is tied up with practice and its task is not merely to explain existing reality, but also to transform it. It is, therefore, not

only a method of cognition, but also a method of action, a method for the revolutionary transformation of reality.

Moreover, as distinct from pre-Marxian materialist and idealist doctrines which in varying degrees distorted the real state of affairs, dialectical and historical materialism is deeply rooted in reality, in the laws governing its functioning and development. The partisanship of Marxist philosophy includes the scientific approach as an indispensable element.

At a certain stage in history, the interests of any exploiting class inevitably clash with the requirements of social progress, and correspondingly with the operation of particular objective laws. This makes it impossible consistently and scientifically to substantiate the interests of such classes and necessitates the rejection of scientific principles that contradict them and the advancement of principles corresponding to and expressing the interests of the exploiting class, though these principles may not reflect reality and objective laws. The interests of the proletariat, on the other hand, are always in line with the objective trends in history, so the working class has a stake in knowing reality and the laws governing the objective process of development. Without this, the proletariat will be unable to interfere actively in the objective process and purposefully transform the surrounding world. It follows, then, that dialectical and historical materialism can serve as the proletariat's world outlook and method for the revolutionary remaking of reality only if it is

founded on knowledge of the objective laws of motion and development and if its principles are scientific.

All this proves that dialectical and historical materialism constitutes a fundamentally new philosophy radically different from all the preceding philosophical systems, and that its emergence was a true revolution in philosophy.

3. The Development of Marxist Philosophy by Lenin

Being a creative science, Marxist philosophy does not stand still–it is continually developing and improving. Every new major step in the development of science and social practice makes an inevitable impact on philosophy, causing a change (enrichment, specification, or addition) in its particular principles or tenets. Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (1870-1924) made an incalculable contribution to the development of dialectical and historical materialism after the death of Marx and Engels.

Lenin thoroughly developed the Marxist theory of matter and consciousness as the reflection of objective reality. He substantiated the decisive role of practice in cognising reality and revealed, on that basis, the actively creative character of consciousness, stressing that "man's consciousness not only reflects the objective world, but creates it".[1] Moreover, he defined the major

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 212.

stages of cognition and its dialectical development towards the truth.

Elaborating on dialectics as a teaching of development, Lenin revealed the essence of the dialectical understanding of development as a repetition of the past stages, but on a higher basis, as a leap-like revolutionary changing of reality caused by inner contradictions, by the clash between different and opposite forces and tendencies.[1]

Lenin analysed on a scientific and materialist basis Hegel's dialectic and its development by Marx in *Capital* and formulated the principle of the identity of dialectics, logic, and the theory of knowledge. He studied the general aspects and connections of reality and universal dialectical laws in the light of this principle and showed, first, that philosophical categories were not only the forms in which the general aspects and connections of reality were reflected but also stages or nodal points in the development of social consciousness and practice, and, second, that the laws of dialectics were not only the universal laws of reality, but also the laws of thinking–the methodological principles guiding people in their practical and cognitive activities. In other words, following Marx and Engels, Lenin developed dialectical materialism not only as a world outlook, but also as a theory of knowledge, a method of thinking and of the practical transformation of reality. "Lenin's further elaboration of materialistic dialectics, his study of the dialectical mate-

[1] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, pp. 54-55.

rialist theory of knowledge ... are of everlasting importance. Lenin was the first thinker of our century who saw in the achievements of natural science of his time the beginning of a tremendous scientific revolution, who was able to disclose and generalise philosophically the revolutionary meaning of the fundamental discoveries made by the great explorers of nature. He gave a brilliant philosophical interpretation of new scientific data in the period of the drastic 'breaking of principles' in the leading fields of natural science. His idea of the inexhaustibility of matter has become the general principle of natural science."[1]

Lenin laid special emphasis on the development of the theory of historical materialism. He gave a comprehensive analysis of the laws governing the interconnection between social being and social consciousness, material and ideological relations, objective and subjective factors, the spontaneous and the conscious. Lenin underlined the decisive importance of the objective circumstances under which people live, and showed the immense role played by revolutionary theory, the revolutionary party guided by this theory, by the revolutionary class, and by historical personalities in transforming the life of society, in replacing historically obsolete social forms by new ones corresponding to the current level of development of the productive forces.

[1] "*On the Centenary of the Birth of V. I. Lenin,* Theses of the Central Committee, Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Moscow, 1970.

Lenin demonstrated the importance of revolutionary ideas in orientating the spontaneous movement of the masses to one objective–the revolutionary transformation of the existing social and political system. Lenin emphasised that the development of a socialist ideology and its dissemination among the working people, the proletariat, was a task of paramount importance for a proletarian party.

His studies of the imperialist stage of capitalism enabled Lenin to conclude that it was the last stage, that it represented the eve of the socialist revolution, that it was a stage from which society can pass only to socialism. Lenin discovered the law of the uneven economic and political development of capitalist countries under imperialism. This gave him grounds to conclude that the socialist revolution could triumph first in several, or even in one country.

Moreover, Lenin developed the Marxist teaching on the character and motive forces of the bourgeois-democratic revolution and its connection with the socialist revolution, enriching this teaching with important conclusions. He proved that the proletariat, not the bourgeoisie, should lead the bourgeois-democratic revolution at a time when capitalism in the advanced countries had entered its imperialist stage. He also established that the peasantry was an ally of the proletariat and that a victorious bourgeois-democratic revolution should establish the dictatorship of the revolutionary people, of the workers and peasants, not the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The es-

tablishment of the dictatorship of the workers and peasants does not complete such a revolution. Gradually, it develops into a socialist revolution, in the course of which the proletariat in alliance with the poorest peasants and all the exploited classes transforms the life of society along socialist lines. Developing the theory of socialist revolution, Lenin advanced the idea that the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and for socialism should be tied up with the national-liberation struggle of the oppressed peoples.

It was also Lenin who proved that some countries and peoples might embark on a non-capitalist path of development and advance to socialism by-passing the capitalist stage of development. He believed that victory of the socialist revolution in the advanced countries and their all-out assistance to backward nations was a major condition for such a transition.

The theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat occupies a prominent place in Lenin's theoretical legacy. Drawing on the experience of the three Russian revolutions, he developed the idea of the proletarian dictatorship, set forth by Marx and Engels, and demonstrated the necessity of establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism; he revealed its essence and specific features as constituting a fundamentally new democracy, laid down the tasks confronting it, described its mechanism and mapped out its ways of development. Lenin's discovery of Soviets as a form of

proletarian dictatorship that emerged in Russia as a result of the creative activities of the revolutionary masses, and his substantiation of their role in ensuring the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution, were of great significance.

After the triumph of the October Revolution, Lenin concentrated his attention on developing the theory of building socialism in Russia and on evaluating the prospects for a world-wide revolution. Lenin proved scientifically that socialism could be built under conditions of capitalist encirclement. He showed that Russia had everything necessary for building socialism and indicated concrete ways for transforming the various aspects of the life of society along socialist lines.

Lenin regarded the conversion of capitalist enterprises into socialist property belonging to the whole people as a way of remaking large-scale capitalist into socialist production. As regards the socialist transformation of small-commodity production, Lenin recommended that the various forms of co-operation be used to turn small-scale private ownership of the means of production into co-operative public ownership.

Lenin advanced the idea that socialism and communism can only be built under the guidance of a Marxist-Leninist party, which enjoys the support and confidence of the working people in all its undertakings and which maps out practical ways for developing society along socialist and communist lines, basing itself on the knowledge of the laws governing the functioning and development of society. This ideas has been borne

out by the experience of building socialism in the Soviet Union and other countries.

Guided by Lenin's theoretical legacy and developing it by generalising the advances of modern science and social experience, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the communist and workers' parties of other socialist countries, and Communists all over the world resolutely oppose today's bourgeois ideology, and right and "left" revisionism, which distort Lenin's revolutionary teaching.

Dialectical materialism

Insofar as the fundamental question of any philosophy is essentially the correlation between matter and consciousness, a presentation of dialectical materialism should start with a description of matter and the basic forms of its existence, the laws governing the emergence of consciousness and its relation to matter. Then we should proceed to an analysis of the laws governing the functioning and development of knowledge as the reflection of reality in man's consciousness. This will be followed by a study of the categories and laws of dialectics as the forms of reflection of the universal aspects and connections of objective reality and knowledge. The order in which categories and laws are discussed is determined by the order in which the universal properties and laws of reality reflected in them are cognised.

Chapter IV

MATTER AND CONSCIOUSNESS

1. A Critique of the Idealist and Metaphysical Views of Matter

As a rule, idealists reject the objective existence of matter. Some hold that it does not exist at all, but was invented by materialists to prove their atheistic conclusions (Berkeley). Others declare it to be a totality of sensations (Mach). Still others represent it as a result of the development of consciousness, as something dependent on or derived from it (Hegel).

All the materialists, however, recognise the real, objective existence of matter. In the course of history, materialist views on the substance of matter have differed considerably. Ancient philosophers were inclined to identify matter with the most widely spread substances or phenomena, such as water (Thales), air (Anaximenes), or fire (Heraclitus). Later, matter was believed to be an infinite multitude of various invariable elements, such, for instance, as the so-called "seeds of things" (Anaxagoras), or atoms (Democritus). The 18th-century French materialists, Feuerbach, and other thinkers considered matter to be the totality of immutable atoms that made up all objects existing in the world.

To view matter as a totality of atoms or substances is both narrow and false. This way of thinking is associated with definite forms of the existence of matter, and raises their inherent properties and states to an absolute. It is unable, therefore, to embrace the entire totality of phenomena occurring in the world and the endless variety of the forms of being.

The inadequacy of the above conception of matter was revealed strikingly during the crisis that gripped natural science at the turn of the 20th century, following the discovery of the electron and radioactivity. The discovery of the electron showed, in particular, that the atom is not immutable and eternal as previously believed, but consists of smaller particles–electrons. Moreover, it was discovered that the mass of an electron is not invariable, but is a direct function of its velocity. Yet it had been believed that the mass of an atom was constant. This notion gave rise to the idea that atoms, and consequently matter, were eternal and indestructible.

The collapse of the notions that atoms were indivisible and eternal and that the mass of bodies was constant and indestructible evoked doubts as regards the objective existence of matter and led to the conclusion that it was disappearing. The logic was as follows: if an atom is divisible, if it disintegrates into electrons whose mass depends on motion, then matter, as something basic underlying all being, disappears and turns into motion. Similar conclusions followed from the discovery of radioactivity. The radioac-

tive decay of uranium, and later of radium, was taken to mean the transformation of matter into motion, or pure energy. Idealists were quick to take this up. They began to assert that the latest advances of natural science refuted materialism, having shown that matter did not exist and had been invented by materialists.

It was necessary to generalise the above scientific discoveries, to bring them in the line with dialectical materialism and refute those idealists who caught at these discoveries. Lenin undertook to solve this problem.

2. Lenin's Definition of Matter

Lenin analysed the above crisis in his book *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* and showed that it had arisen because natural scientists shared the views of the metaphysical materialists and explained the newest discoveries in physics accordingly. Indeed, the notion of matter as a totality of immutable atoms was upheld by metaphysical, not dialectical, materialism. The latter has never reduced matter to atoms, and never considered nor could consider them invariable and eternal. According to dialectical materialism, no concrete form of the existence of matter–atom, molecule or electron–is eternal and invariable. On the contrary, it is constantly in motion and change, under certain conditions turning into other concrete forms, which themselves turn into others, and so on *ad infinitum.* Engels wrote: "For it [dialectical philosophy] nothing is final,

absolute, sacred. It reveals the transitory character of everything and in everything; nothing can endure before it except the uninterrupted process of becoming and of passing away...".[1]

The discovery of the disintegration of the atom into other, smaller particles, as well as the transformation of matter into light, does not, therefore, refute dialectical materialism. On the contrary, it reaffirms the truth of its principles, such as that stating that everything existing in the world is in constant motion and changes from one thing into another.

What, then, is matter as seen by dialectical materialism? The concept of matter is tied up with all that exists outside and independently of the human mind, with the whole of objective reality. So, matter includes not only atoms, but also the "elementary" particles into which they disintegrate; not only substances, but also the light waves they emit under relevant conditions.

"Matter," Lenin wrote, "is a philosophical category denoting the objective reality which is given to man by his sensations, and which is copied, photographed and reflected by our sensations, while existing independently of them."[2]

3. Material Entity. Types of Matter

Matter exists as a multitude of various bodies, or material formations, existencies or entities con-

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 339.
[2] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 130.

nected with one another in a certain way. "The whole of nature accessible to us," Engels wrote, "forms a system, an interconnected totality of bodies, and by bodies we understand here all material existences extending from stars to atoms. . . ."[1]

A material entity or body is only a part of matter, so it does not possess all the properties inherent in matter. Specifically, it is not eternal and infinite, it emerges only under absolutely definite conditions, it occupies a limited place in space, it exists for a certain period and then disappears, turning into other material entities. All the same, matter is eternal and spatially boundless. This testifies to the fact that the concept of matter is associated with the universe in general and with the entire totality of its constituent material entities.

Material entities make up corresponding groups which form certain levels or stages in the development of matter. These stages have their specific qualitative characteristics. Engels wrote that "the discrete parts at various stages (ether atoms, chemical atoms, masses, heavenly bodies) are various *nodal points* which determine the various *qualitative* modes of existence of matter in general. . . ."[2]

Material entities that have a common origin and represent a stage in the development of matter from a lower to a higher level, make up a type

[1] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, Moscow, 1974, p. 70.
[2] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, pp. 293-94.

of matter. These are, for instance, electromagnetic and gravitational fields, electrons, protons, neutrons, atoms, molecules, living organisms, and human society.

4. Matter and the Material

As already noted, the concept of matter in the strict sense of the word is applicable to the world in general, to the totality of material entities. As regards particular material entities, each of them is but a part of matter, a certain stage in its development. However, material entities have one thing in common–they all exist outside and independently of consciousness. The concept of the material was developed to reflect this common trait inherent in material entities. It can be applied both to the world in general and to the material entities making up this world, to types of matter, to objective properties and relations that exist outside and independently of the human mind. Thus, *the material embraces everything that relates to matter and characterises it as distinct from consciousness.*

5. Matter as Substance

When we defined matter we contrasted it to consciousness. Yet, as already pointed out, it differs not only from consciousness, but also from its own entities, states and properties. In this sense matter is what underlies all its manifestations–specific states and properties. As substance,

matter is the basis of all that exists. The various phenomena observed in the world are but manifestations of the single material nature, the various forms of its existence, its various states and properties. In this respect consciousness as a specific property of matter does not oppose matter's other properties, but occupies an equal place among them. Like any other property of matter, it has a reason for its existence in matter, in its certain organisation.

As distinct from metaphysical materialism, which sees matter's substantiality in its unchangeability, dialectical materialism ties up the substantiality of matter with its continuous motion and change, during which matter transforms from one qualitative state into another and "remains eternally the same in all its transformations".[1] This is expressed, above all, in the constancy of its quantity, which remains the same under any change. As regards the qualitative aspect of matter, its substantiality is expressed in the preservation of its basic properties or attributes. "...None of its [matter's–*Author*] attributes can ever be lost...."[2] If it is lost in one place, in one material entity, it will inevitably manifest itself elsewhere, in another material entity.

Moreover, the substantiality of matter is also expressed in the ability of each of its entities to be transformed under certain conditions into any other entity. Any "elementary" particle, for ex-

[1] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 39.
[2] *Ibid.*

ample, can change under certain conditions into another "elementary" particle. This means that every material entity possesses in itself, in its nature, all the properties of matter.

The material unity of the world is expressed in the substantiality of matter. The infinite multitude of various phenomena that make up reality has one material origin, constituting the various forms, states or properties of matter.

6. Motion—a Universal Form of the Existence of Matter

a) Narrow Metaphysical Concepts of Motion. The Marxist Concept of Motion

The concept of motion emerged together with philosophy. Initially, it was thought to be the appearance of one and the disappearance of another. This view of motion was held by the first Greek philosophers, such as Thales, Anaximenes, and Anaximander.

The first Greek philosophers stressed motion and change, neglecting, however, stability. Other thinkers, particularly Xenophanes, Parmenides, and Zenon of the Eleatic school, saw the importance of stability. As distinct from the first philosophers, they made stability their point of departure and, having absolutised it, arrived at the negation of motion. Empedocles reinstated the teaching of motion and attempted to coordinate it with the recognition of stability. He held that the four "roots"—water, air, fire, and earth—made

up all things and were eternal and unchangeable. Motion, he believed, was the movement of the above unchangeable "roots", their integration and division, rather than the destruction of one and the appearance of another.

Aristotle developed the teaching of motion. He revived the view that motion was the inception of one thing and destruction of another. But he also included in his doctrine–though in a sublimated form–the views of motion held by other philosophers, particularly Empedocles. Aristotle thought of motion not only as destruction and inception, but also as growth, decrease, qualitative changes, as well as the movement of bodies in space.

The tendency to absolutise the mechanistic form of motion appeared during the subsequent development of materialist philosophy. It predominated in the 17th and 18th centuries, when motion was believed to be the movement of bodies in space. Specifically, this view was shared by Descartes and Holbach. "Motion," Holbach wrote, "is a force helping a body to change or to seek to change its position."[1]

The view of motion as the movement of bodies in space is narrow. It does not embrace the entire multitude of changes inherent in matter. For instance, changes occurring in an atomic nucleus, in a living organism, or in society are not simple movements.

Only the founders of dialectical materialism

[1] P. H. Holbach, *Système de la Nature*, p. 10.

gave the first consistently scientific definition of motion. Engels, for instance, wrote: "Motion, as applied to matter, is *change in general.*"[1] It "comprehends all changes and processes occurring in the universe, from mere change of place right up to thinking".[2]

To sum up, *motion is a philosophical concept denoting all changes occurring in objective reality.*

b) Basic Forms of the Motion of Matter

There is an infinite multitude of various forms of the motion of matter. The basic ones are: the physical form which includes the movement of elementary particles and fields, the movement of nuclear particles and molecules; the chemical form related to the movement of atoms: the biological form connected with the functioning and development of living organisms; the social form embracing changes occurring in society; and the mechanical form of motion, which is the movement of bodies in space.

The basic forms of the motion of matter are always interconnected and interdependent. One form of motion is a prerequisite for the appearance of another form. The movement of elementary particles, for example, is a prerequisite for the emergence of atoms and their motion. The latter is the basis for the formation of molecules and their movement. Under certain conditions, this in

[1] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 247.
[2] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 69.

turn leads to the emergence of life and thus to the organic form of the motion of matter, which creates prerequisites for the appearance of the social form of the motion of matter.

All the basic forms of motion are stages in the development of matter; they are related to the corresponding types of matter and correlate to each other as lower to higher forms. A lower form is present, in its sublated shape, in a higher form. The physical form of motion is present, though transformed, in the chemical form, the latter–in the biological form, and this–in the social form. A lower form, while being present in a higher form, is not decisive and occupies a subordinate place in it. A higher form of motion plays a decisive role and determines the essence of phenomena representing the given form of the motion of matter.

c) The Inherent Connection Between Motion and Matter

Motion is an attribute of matter, its fundamental property. There has never been nor can there be motion without matter or matter without motion.

The law of the correspondence of mass and energy testifies to the inalienable link between matter and motion. According to this law, an absolutely definite amount of energy corresponds to a definite amount of mass. Any change in the mass engenders a corresponding change in the energy, and vice versa.

Some bourgeois philosophers and physicists do not recognise the inherent link between motion and matter and are trying to prove that matter can be reduced to motion. On this basis, they declare energy to be primary, determining, while matter, they say, is but a form of energy. To prove their point, they refer to cases of matter changing into light, such as the conversion of an electron and a positron into a pair or a trinity of photons, regarding this as the transformation of matter into pure energy.

The American scientist Roy Marshall writes, for example: "One form of energy is matter. The conversion of matter to pure energy or of pure energy to matter is possible, under certain circumstances."[1]

The exponents of this point of view proceed from the metaphysical notion of matter as chemical substance and, by this token, distort the actual situation. The conversion of electrons and positrons into photons—particles of light—is not the conversion of matter into energy (pure motion), but rather the conversion of one type of matter into another, for the entire objective reality is matter. It includes not only substance, but also light and an infinite number of other known and yet unknown forms of being.

Since matter is the objective reality existing outside and independently of human conscious-

[1] Roy K. Marshall, *The Nature of Things*, N.Y., 1951, p. 47.

ness, neither the whole nor a part of matter can disappear or turn into something immaterial. Matter exists eternally and continually changes from one qualitative state or type into another. The same holds true for motion. Being inherently linked with matter, motion cannot disappear nor change into something else. Its quantity always remains the same. Engels stressed that matter and motion are eternal and inherently linked. He wrote: "Matter without motion is just as inconceivable as motion without matter. Motion is therefore as uncreatable and indestructible as matter itself. . . ." And later: ". . . the quantity of motion existing in the world is always the same."[1]

d) Motion and Rest

The assertion that matter is inherently linked with motion and that the latter is a mode of its existence may give rise to the opinion that there is no stability or constancy in the world. This view was advanced, for instance, by the Greek philosopher Kratylos. But this is far from the truth. Stability or rest is another property of matter, apart from motion.

As distinct from motion which is a continuous change, rest signifies stability, constancy. Though the opposite of motion, rest is not isolated from motion. It is inherently linked with motion, being an aspect and particular case of it. *Rest is a re-*

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 73.

latively stable system of motion–balanced motion. The solar system, for example, viewed as a material formation at rest, is made up of the planets moving in strict cycles–it is balanced motion. Any body, such as a material entity in inanimate nature, a living organism, or human society, is a relatively stable system of motion. Once you do away with the changes inherent in these bodies, they disappear as given, relatively stable (resting) material entities.

Besides balanced motion, every material entity includes an infinite multitude of other changes which, for the time being, are inherent in the given relatively stable system of motion and do not upset the equilibrium of its constituent parts. Having reached a definite level, however, these changes destroy the given relatively stable system of motion and lead to the formation of a new stable system. The latter, after existing for a certain time, is also destroyed by changes occurring within it and gives rise to yet other relatively stable (resting) systems, which in turn engender still other systems, and so on. This eternal process of matter changing from one stable system into another clearly shows that motion is absolute. It exists always–at the inception of a relatively stable system (since any new system emerges as a result of changes occurring within the previous systems); through a relatively stable system (since it constitutes balanced motion); within such a system, and at the moment of its destruction and the emergence of a new relatively stable system. As for rest, it is relative. It emerges together with a

relatively stable system and disappears when the system is destroyed. Then it re-emerges and, having lasted for a certain time, disappears, this process going on *ad infinitum.*

e) Motion and Development

We have noted that matter is in constant motion and change and eternally passes from one stable state to another, destroying some material entities and creating others. But what is the trend in such transformations? What replaces the destroyed material entities?

Some philosophers believe that the motion of matter is circular, that it eternally repeats the same cycles. Others maintain that, in the course of continuous changes in matter, there occurs a movement from higher to lower stages, i.e. regression. Yet others think that all the changes observed in the universe are movement from lower to higher stages.

In reality the first, second, and third take place together, yet the dominant trend is the movement from the lower to the higher.

The movement from the lower to the higher, from the simple to the complex is called development.

Examples of development are the formation of atoms from "elementary" particles and molecules from atoms; the emergence of living organisms from inanimate substances; the conversion of the simplest, non-cellular organisms into single-cell and then to multi-cell organisms; transition from

organisms capable of reflecting the environment through irritability to organisms possessing sensations and a psyche; the conversion of an ape herd into human society; the transition of society from the primitive-communal system to the slave-owning system, feudalism, capitalism, and socialism.

While development is the dominant trend in the universe, not every specific form of the existence of matter undergoes development. Besides material entities that undergo changes from the lower to the higher, there are also those that are either in a state of circular movement or undergoing regressive changes. What is most significant and universal in development is the fact that all material entities possess the ability to become more complex and to pass from the lower to the higher, rather than to develop in general. This ability, inherent in all matter and in every material entity, manifests itself, like any other property, only under relevant conditions. Wherever such conditions exist, a change from the lower to the higher, from the simple to the complex, will invariably occur. If such conditions are absent, a circular movement or regressive changes take place. Those material entities that are involved in a circular movement or undergo regressive changes do not lose their ability to pass from the lower to the higher. This ability is preserved whatever the changes or transformations; it manifests itself as soon as propitious conditions begin to emerge.

7. Space and Time

a) The Concept of Space and Time

We have noted that every single material entity is part of matter. Being one of the infinite number of matter's connections it occupies a definite place, possesses extension and correlates with the other material entities that surround it.

The extension of material entities and the correlation of each of them with surrounding material entities is called space.

Moreover, as has already been noted, every material entity is not eternal; it emerges as a result of changes in certain preceding material entities, passes through stages of development and then disappears by turning into other material entities.

The duration of the existence of material entities and the correlation of each of them with the preceding and subsequent material entities is called time.

b) A Critique of Idealist and Metaphysical Concepts of Space and Time

As a rule, idealists reject the objectivity of space and time and their independence from consciousness. Berkeley, for instance, believed that any place or extension existed in the spirit alone, like time which he regarded as a consecutive manifestation of ideas in our consciousness. Kant also rejected the objective existence of space and time. He regarded them as a form of inner sensation,

rather than a characteristic feature of things.

Many modern bourgeois naturalists and philosophers do not accept the existence of space and time in the microworld either. They include, among others, James Jeans and A. Eddington, the latter saying that, for low-numbered states, "space and time do not exist, at least I can see no reason to believe that they do".[1]

Some philosophers recognise the existence of space and time, but they reject their connection with matter and take them as forms of being that are completely independent from matter. This concept of space and time dates back to antiquity, specifically to the Pythagoreans. For them, space was a huge box filled with various things and numbers. It was absolutely independent of the latter and could exist without them. Democritus believed space to be a vacuum, while Aristotle regarded it as a place occupied consecutively by various things.

The idea that space and time are independent of matter was developed in the classical form by Newton. He thought space to be absolute. It is eternal, constant and stable, and does not depend on objects. Objects, on the other hand, depend on space, exist in it, and move in relation to it. Time is treated by Newton in a similar way. It is also absolute, exists by itself, independently of particular events, flows evenly and always in the same manner.

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[1] A. S. Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World*, Cambridge, 1931, p. 198.

Descartes made an attempt to bridge the metaphysical gap between space and matter. By declaring extension to be the only and most important property of matter he, in fact, equated space with matter. Spinoza made one step further in the same direction. He regarded space as an attribute of matter. Locke, too, connected space with matter, regarding the former as the magnitude of bodies.

Though pre-Marxian philosophers tied up space with matter, they stopped short of understanding the dependence of spatial characteristics upon the nature of material entities. Moreover, they believed that space was the same for all bodies and that it possessed the same properties.

c) The Basic Characteristics of Space and Time

Dialectical materialism provided a scientific solution to this problem. According to dialectical materialism, space and time are the necessary objective properties of any material entity and the objectively real forms of existence of matter. The extension and duration of being are not solely the properties of stars, planets, and things (i.e. macrobodies), but also the properties of microbodies (i.e. "elementary" particles). Lenin wrote: "There is nothing in the world but matter in motion, and matter in motion cannot move otherwise than in space and time."[1]

Space and time are not only connected with

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 175.

matter, but are also dependent upon it; they are determined by the nature of material entities and the form of motion inherent in them. This proposition of dialectical materialism is fully borne out by modern scientific data showing that spatial and temporal characteristics depend on the motion and distribution of gravitational masses. The greater is the force of gravitation, the more curved space is and the slower the flow of time. Moreover, the theory of relativity shows that spatial correlations in a moving system shift as compared to a static system, a body flattens out in the direction of its movement, and the flow of time slackens.

Space is three-dimensional, which is its major characteristic. It has three directions—right and left, up and down, and back and forth. All these directions are graphically shown by three mutually perpendicular lines. By moving parallel to them, one may locate any body in space.

True, the physical theories of four-dimensional and multidimensional space have been developed recently. When scientists speak of a four-dimensional world, they take time as the fourth dimension. So arguments about four dimensions do not contradict reality but, at the same time, they do not disprove the proposition that space is three-dimensional. On the contrary, these arguments stem from the above proposition. The same is true of multidimensional space. Saying that dimensions are multiple, physicists or mathematicians do not refer to the spatial characteristics of a body or, to be more precise, not only to spatial characteristics.

They have in mind the measurement of various properties of that body (a material entity), of which it has an infinite multitude. It follows then that an infinite multitude of dimensions is also possible. But does this disprove the theory of space as being three-dimensional? Of course not. It only proves that the concepts "four-dimensional space" and "multidimensional space" are used to characterise the various aspects and states of a material entity, rather than in their proper sense, i.e. to denote the properties of space.

If space has three dimensions, time has only one. It always flows in one direction–forwards. The present becomes the past, and the future becomes the present. This direction cannot be changed–time is irreversible.

Infinity is another major characteristic of space and time. Superficially, one may think that space and time are finite, since they exist as the properties and relations of finite material entities. Actually, this is far from the truth. Though space and time exist in the form of finite things, they are infinite. The fact is that every thing is tied up with an infinite multitude of other things. Its spatial relations turn into the spatial relations of the other things that surround it, the spatial relations of the latter turn into the spatial relations of the things that surround them, and so on *ad infinitum*. Thus, being a sum of finite magnitudes alone, space unfolds into infinity.

The same holds true for time. Every particular thing has a beginning and an end of its existence. But it was preceded by an infinite number of other

things which will be followed by others, this process going on *ad infinitum*. The process of changing from some things or qualitative states to others has neither a beginning nor an end. Time will go on for ever.

The infinity of space and time, it should be noted, is recognised by far from all philosophical schools. As a rule, theologians tie up the finity of the material world in time with God's will, and idealists with the creative activity of consciousness which, while existing outside of space and time, gives birth to sensuous things that are spatially limited and finite in time.

Some modern bourgeois scientists and philosophers refer to the theory of relativity when they try to prove that the world is limited in space. According to the relativity theory, the observed density of substance and the corresponding force of gravitation must lead to the existence of matter in the form of a closed sphere. This conclusion is made on the basis of the equations of the general theory of relativity, which presumes that matter is distributed evenly in space. The latest findings of astronomy, however, show that matter is distributed extremely unevenly in space.

Attempts are also made to use the so-called "red shift" to prove that the world is finite in space and time. It has been established that a displacement of the spectral lines toward the red colour is observed in light coming from the stars. This fact indicates that the observable part of the Universe is expanding and that galaxies are moving away from each other at the speed of 120,000-

170,000 km/sec. Knowing this speed, one may calculate the time when this dispersing matter made up one whole. All this gave rise to theories arguing that the world has originated from a Father-Atom created by God, that it is limited in space, and so on.

This way of reasoning is based on the assumption that all the regularities observed in one part of the Universe must necessarily be observed in other parts of it. Actually, however, not all the regularities observed in one field of reality at a certain time are observed in its other fields. It is only the general laws studied by philosophy that are universal. As regards other laws and regularities, they manifest themselves in one particular field or part of the Universe at a given time, but this does not mean that they would necessarily be observed in another field. So the expansion of the observed part of the Universe in no way means that its other parts are also expanding at this moment. They may expand, or they may contract. It is more likely that processes of expansion and contraction are taking place in the Universe in equal measure, that one tendency is predominant in one part for a certain period of time and another tendency in another part. Then they change places.

8. Reflection as a Universal Property of Matter

We have already noted that matter exists through separate material entities finite in space and time, which do not simply exist, but influence

each other. By interacting, they cause corresponding changes in each other. These changes are conditioned by both the nature of the material entity in which they occur and by the peculiarities of the body acting upon this entity. The peculiarities of the affecting body leave an impact on these changes and are expressed in them. This is the essence of the property of reflection inherent in all material entities.

Thus, *reflection, as a universal property of matter, is the ability of a material entity to reproduce, in the corresponding changes of its properties or states, the peculiarities of other bodies that affect it.*

The most common examples of reflection are the deformation of a body under the action of another body; the heating of a conductor under the effect of an electric current passing through it; the expansion of a body's volume caused by heating; and so on.

Any material entity affected by other bodies is active rather than passive. It has a reverse effect on those bodies and causes corresponding changes in them, which are a form of the reflection of its own peculiarities. Therefore, any interacting material entity is both reflecting and reflected. It reflects in a certain form the peculiarities of the objects affecting it, and is itself reproduced in the corresponding changes occurring in those objects.

This proves the universality of the property of reflection, which is inherent in all material entities.

9. Development of the Forms of Reflection

The form in which material entities reproduce the peculiarities of bodies affecting them depends on the nature of these entities. Qualitatively different material entities therefore reflect one and the same action in different ways. The difference in the forms of reflection is especially evident when matter passes from one qualitative stage to another.

In inanimate nature, reflection constitutes a corresponding change of the physical properties or chemical reactions reproducing in one way or another the peculiarities of the interacting bodies or phenomena. In the simplest animal or vegetable organisms, reflection is manifested in the form of *irritability*, which is a response to an outside action, the response having a certain direction of actions,[1] a certain selectivity. For example, a plant reacts to the action of sunlight by changing the position of its leaves—it turns them in such a way that they become perpendicular to the falling rays. This position helps the plant to absorb a greater quantity of solar energy which is essential for its functioning and development.

The emergence of more complex and developed living organisms, particularly those with a nervous system, has made reflection more complex. Now it assumes the form of *excitability*, a distinctive feature of which is that a special organ—the

[1] See F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 179.

nervous system–begins to perform a reflecting function. This system controls the interaction of the organism with the outside world. Its separate tissues or cells perceive outside actions, while others transmit the resultant irritation to the corresponding parts of the organism, thereby ensuring the performance of the necessary responsive action.

Originally, the nervous system existed in the form of nerve tissues and cells scattered all over the animal's body. Later it underwent substantial changes during the organism's subsequent development. Separate nerve cells inosculated and formed nerve ganglia connected by the nerve trunk. Then nerve ganglia combined, thus causing the development of special centres–the brain and spinal cord–and forming the *central nervous system.* The latter's appearance caused substantial changes in the reflecting activity of an organism. Previously, living organisms reacted only to irritants connected with their vital activities, whereas now that the central nervous system has evolved, they begin to react to irritants which of themselves have no importance for the organism, but are linked to phenomena vital for it. In other words, the interconnection of an organism with the surrounding world was previously maintained on the basis of unconditioned reflexes, whereas now the latter have been supplemented with conditioned reflexes. These allow the organism to reflect connections between various phenomena that are not vital for it and those that are. Thanks to this, animals have become able to react sen-

sitively to environmental changes and to adapt themselves accordingly.

The form of reflecting reality through conditioned reflexes differs greatly from the preceding forms, such as irritability and excitability. The latter were biological forms of reflection, while conditioned reflexes are a form of psychological reflection of reality.

10. Peculiarities of the Psychological Form of Reflection

The psyche as a special form of reflecting reality emerges together with the central nervous system, which develops the ability to evolve conditioned reflexes. The emergence of the psyche gives rise to a signal, image reflection of reality. *The psychic is the form of an image of the phenomena affecting an organism, arising in the brain due to the development of a conditioned reflex.* A specific feature of a conditioned reflex is the reflection of phenomena of the outside world that are of themselves unimportant to the organism, but prove to be connected with phenomena vital for it. When a conditioned reflex is developed, the latter phenomena play the role of signals of other phenomena that are connected with the vital activities of the organism and are biologically important for it. Their impact on the organism is equivalent to the impact of the biologically important phenomena, of which they are signals. At the moment of this impact, images of the corresponding biologically important phenomena emerge

on the basis of temporal connections formed in the brain.

For instance, the sound of a bell ringing has of itself no importance for a dog. He does not react to it. If, however, the bell rings and food appears simultaneously, the dog will start reacting to it as he reacts to the appearance of food–salivation will start. By using the temporal connection formed in his brain between the nidi of excitation caused by the impact of the bell ringing and food, the dog will reflect the dependence established between the latter, where the bell ringing is playing the role of the signal portending the appearance of food. This is why the dog reacts by secreting saliva.

Thus, a conditioned reflex presupposes the establishment of a connection with a biologically important phenomenon at the moment the signal is perceived. Being an essential aspect or moment of a conditioned reflex, which is a physiological phenomenon, the psychic is therefore closely linked with the physiological–it emerges and exists on the basis of the latter. The psychic is the result of the physiological activity of the brain, which is the brain's response to the impact on the organism of various phenomena of the outside world. The psychic develops on the basis of certain physiological connections formed in the brain and is secondary to these connections and the brain, i.e. it depends on them.

11. Consciousness—the Highest Form of the Psychic Reflection of Reality

a) The Emergence of Consciousness

The psychic form of the reflection of reality evolved at a certain stage in the development of animal organisms, particularly their nervous system. It does not remain unchanged, but is constantly improving and developing, turning, under certain conditions, into a qualitatively different form of reflection–consciousness.

Labour is the condition for transforming the psyche of animals into human consciousness. It is rooted in the reflex activities of animals who used natural objects to achieve corresponding objectives connected with the satisfaction of certain needs of the organism. Scientists believe that certain species of anthropoid apes began to use natural objects in order to satisfy their needs, such as a stick to knock down fruit or a stone to defend themselves. At first, these actions were occasional. But since, as a rule, they yielded positive results and helped satisfy a particular need, they became the basis for developing a conditioned reflex and with it the habit of using natural objects as "tools" under appropriate circumstances. This habit resulted in substantial changes in animal behaviour. Their connection with the environment was now maintained through natural objects. Indeed, previously they reacted directly to the impact of external reality, whereas now they themselves affect the surrounding world through natural objects that they use as "tools",

This more complex connection of the organism with the environment had a positive impact on the development of the nervous system, the brain in particular. It began forming more and more connections and performing ever more complicated functions, thereby developing and perfecting itself. In turn, this exerted a positive influence on the "tool activity" of animals, which also developed and became more complex. At a certain stage in the development of this activity, animals, seeing no "tool" to help them perform a particular action, began to seek ways of adapting other objects for this purpose. A trend developed for making the necessary "tool" by processing certain objects. The development of this trend among man's animal ancestors conditioned a gradual transformation of reflex activity into conscious actions aimed at changing the environment by specially made implements.

This activity became the necessary form of contact between creatures developing from the animal world and between them and surrounding reality. Certain relations developed between them that were independent of their will, thus uniting them in a single, welded entity–society. A certain degree of co-ordination in the actions of the individuals that made up this entity was required for it to emerge, function and develop. This, however, presupposed an understanding of a common goal and the tasks, distribution of functions in attaining this goal, and exchange of ideas among individuals acting in concert. "In short," Engels wrote, "men in the making arrived at the point

where *they had something to say* to each other."[1] This emerging necessity conditioned the development of a means to satisfy it: language, in which consciousness acquired a material form of existence corresponding to its social nature. Being a system of symbols ensuring the storing, processing and transmitting of information, language is a means of expressing thoughts and a means of intercourse among people.

Men in the making began to designate particular phenomena, their properties and actions by suitable sounds or symbols, using them to transmit their thoughts to each other. The names given by them to particular phenomena acted as substitutes for them. People reacted to them in the same way as to the phenomena designated by them. Words became the signals of particular phenomena. By using them, people reflected surrounding reality, exchanged information and used it in their everyday life and activities.

The reflection of reality through a system of words is a specifically human form of reflection. Animals reflect surrounding reality through the signals of reality itself. It has been noted above that the role of these signals is played by phenomena or properties that, by themselves, are not significant for the vital activity of an organism, but that are in a certain relationship with other biologically important phenomena or properties. The Russian physiologist Ivan Pavlov called this system of signals, common to animal and man,

[1] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 173.

the first signalling system. The specifically human signalling system, the system of words that play the role of signals of particular phenomena of the surrounding world, he called the second signalling system.

The development of language introduced substantial changes in man's reflective activity. Language liberated man from his blind dependence on actual circumstances, created the conditions necessary for broad generalisations and intercourse with other people, greatly contributing thereby to the formation and development of man's consciousness.

b) The Essence of Consciousness

Consciousness is connected with labour and society that developed on the basis of labour. It is therefore an essential aspect of the social form of the motion of matter, although it exists through the consciousness of the individuals making up human society. Each individual uses an existing language, the means of labour and modes of activity to assimilate the experience accumulated by society and to transmit to society his personal experience in the form of cultural and material values created by him.

Having developed as an essential aspect of the life of society that began to emerge on the basis of labour, consciousness manifested itself among man's ancestors primarily through an awareness of their being, of their existence, through their differentiating themselves from the surrounding

world, and through their definite attitude towards it. An animal does not distinguish itself from the environment. It merges completely with its vital activities. A savage who has acquired consciousness notices for the first time that he exists, that various objects surround him, and that he is somehow related to them and they to each other. By becoming aware of his instincts and habits, he gradually begins to understand what is going on around him. Thus, *consciousness* is awareness of what is happening in the surrounding world, which is nothing other than knowledge.

The outside world is present in the consciousness in the form of images taking shape in man's brain as a result of his interaction with it. The sum total of these images reflecting reality makes up man's knowledge. By using these images and the information they contain concerning the particular properties and connections of the objects and phenomena of the surroundnig world, man comes to understand what is happening around him.

This understanding is a necessary condition for man to take his bearings in the world. Guided by a correct perception of reality and a knowledge of its particular aspects and connections, man anticipates the future and reproduces, in the form of ideal images, that which does not yet exist, but must occur following certain actions upon existing reality.

Proceeding from this anticipatory reflection of reality, man sets himself corresponding tasks and subordinates his behaviour and actions to them.

Thus, purposefulness is a major attribute of human consciousness. The fulfilment of this function distinguishes human behaviour from that of animals, and sensible human activity from the instinctive actions of animals. "A spider," Marx wrote, "conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of every labour-process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement."[1]

The anticipatory reflection of reality underlies not only goal-setting activities, but also the constructive, transformative activity of consciousness, which is a major aspect of the latter's essence. Having emerged under the direct impact of labour, which presupposes the transformation of the world in accordance with man's needs, consciousness creates something new, that did not exist before, on the basis of the knowledge it possesses. This new thing, expressed in a system of ideal images, becomes a real plan translating a particular possibility of matter into reality. Thus, being a reflection of the world, consciousness is also constructive—it actively influences the surrounding world and transforms it in keeping with the requirements of society.

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[1] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 174.

To sum up, *consciousness is the reflection of reality in the human brain, accompanied by an understanding of what is happening in the outside world, and goal-setting and thinking activity based on this understanding, which ensures a corresponding orientation in the surrounding world and its constructive transformation in the interests of society.*

c) The Correlation of Consciousness and Matter

It follows from the above that consciousness is secondary in relation to matter. This is expressed, above all, in the fact that it does not exist always and everywhere, but emerges at a specific stage in the development of matter only in highly organised material entities. As such, consciousness is necessarily tied up with matter and cannot exist without it. Matter, on the other hand, is not dependent on consciousness, having existed before it emerged.

Moreover, consciousness is also secondary because it is a reflection of the outside world, a picture of objectively existing things, their properties and relations. As such consciousness cannot exist independently of material objects, inasmuch as a reflection cannot exist independently of the reflected object, whereas the latter can exist independently of its reflection.

d) The Material and the Ideal

Being a specific psychic phenomenon, consciousness emerges in the brain as a result of certain physiological processes occurring within it. However, in its relation to the outside world, with reality reflected in it, we find that consciousness is *ideal.*

The ideal in consciousness is expressed in that the images that form it possess neither the properties of the real objects reflected in it, nor those of the nervous physiological processes underlying their emergence. The images do not contain a grain of matter characteristic of reflected reality and the brain. They are devoid of weight, space dimensions, or any other physical property.

Though the ideal is different from the material, it is inherently linked to it, developing and existing only in that which is material–the human brain. It is a result of the influence exerted by material phenomena on the sense organs. Its content is determined by these phenomena, being a reflection of them. Marx underlined the intrinsic connection between the ideal and the material and the former's dependence on the latter. He wrote: "... the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought."[1]

[1] Karl Marx, *Capital,* Vol. I, p. 29.

e) The Subjectivity of Consciousness

The emergence of consciousness presupposes that man separates himself from surrounding reality, understands what is happening there, and takes account of it in his activities. All this makes man a subject, a being endowed with the ability to understand what is happening around him, setting himself definite goals and performing actions to achieve these goals. By his very nature, the subject is active. His relative independence is the result of his influence upon the environment in order to cognise and transform it. As distinct from the subject, the reality cognised and transformed by him is the object.

Since man emerges and exists as a member of a particular group of necessarily interconnected and interdependent individuals, i.e. a member of society, the latter should be treated as the universal subject. It is society that cognises and transforms the surrounding world. As for the individual, he is the subject only in as far as he expresses the essence of society.

The subject possesses an intrinsically specific inner world which is an ideal reflection of the outside world, of objective reality. This inner spiritual world constitutes the realm of the subjective. *Thus, all that relates to man's (society's) spiritual world, that is included in the sphere of consciousness and is realised by the subject, makes up the subjective.*

As the spiritual world of the subject, the subjective depends on the latter, on his peculiarities,

specific features and state. But not everything in the subject's spiritual world is dependent on him. In man's subjective world, there are aspects stemming from objective reality that are independent of the subject–man and society. These aspects are the objective within the subjective; they are a specific form of existence of the outside world within the inner world of the subject. This means that consciousness, while being a subjective, aware reflection of reality, is a unity of the subjective and the objective. It includes aspects that reflect properties of the object and do not depend on the subject, and aspects that depend on the subject, on the condition of his nervous system, his personal experience, social status, conditions of life, and so forth.

The activeness of consciousness, realised through the purposeful actions of the subject, is a major form in which his subjectivity is expressed. Before taking any action, the subject sets himself a certain goal, specifies the ways and means of achieving it, makes a decision to undertake a certain course of action, and so forth. In a word, all his actions pass through the sphere of consciousness and are manifestations of his will.

Being a manifestation of subjectivity, the activeness of consciousness enhances rather than excludes the objectivity of its content. By taking a certain pursposeful course of action, the subject intervenes in objective processes, changes them in a certain way, thereby transforming the subjective that existed in his consciousness into the objective that exists outside and independently of him.

Chapter V

KNOWLEDGE

1. The Essence of Knowledge

Knowledge is the reflection of reality in man's consciousness, the conscious reproduction of the object under study, its properties and relations, in the form of ideal images.

Idealist philosophers oppose the proposition that knowledge (cognition) is the reflection of reality. Thus, subjective idealists reduce it to the study of the relationship between sensations and notions, regarding them as the basis of all being. On the other hand, objective idealists present knowledge as the self-development of the idea (the mind), irrespective of the material world. The German philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz, for instance, wrote: "Our thoughts come from our own Self without any direct influence of all other creatures on the Soul."[1]

Though exponents of the above concept recognise that the world is cognisable, they divorce knowledge from reality, from its practical transformation, and thereby in fact hamper the attainment of true knowledge.

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[1] G. W. Leibnitz, *Neuen Abhandlungen über den menschlichen Verstand*, Berlin, 1874, S. 429.

As distinct from philosophers who recognise the knowability of the surrounding world, but distort the essence of cognition, agnostics (*a* is the Greek for "no", and *gnosis* for knowledge) reject any possibility of cognising the outside world. Agnostic views were held by Immanuel Kant, David Hume, and others. Hume, for instance, reasoned that only images or sense-perceptions were within the reach of our mind. We do not know the source or causes of these images. They may result from the influence of objects on our sense organs, or from the energy of the mind itself, or from the action of some invisible and unknown spirit, or from something else. Experience, he continued, should have told us all about this, but at this point it is silent and cannot be otherwise, since the mind, having to do only with sense-perceptions, is unable to compare sense-perceptions with the object. In this case, any experience will be reduced to a comparison of some sense-perception with others.

Hume's proposition that experience attests to the unknowability of objective reality is absolutely unfounded. Experience, if treated materialistically as the practical activities of men, shows, on the contrary, that man is capable of cognising the outside world and that knowledge is the reflection of objective reality in man's consciousness in the form of ideal images.

This reflection, however, is neither passive nor mechanical. It is a constructive and creative activity. The subject does not reflect everything he sees, but only that which is necessary for his

vital activities, which is connected in some way with his requirements and can be used to satisfy them.

In cognising reality, people set themselves particular objectives that determine the range of objects chosen for study, the main avenues of knowledge, its forms, and so on. The content of these objectives is determined by the level of the development of society, particularly that of the productive forces and the corresponding relations of production among people, as well as by that of knowledge itself. Today, for instance, man sets himself such objectives as to learn the laws governing the interaction of the "elementary" particles that go to make up the nucleus of an atom, to study the structure of the molecules that underlie the vital processes in an organism and to understand the mechanics of storing and retrieving information. In the not-so-distant past, however, his goals in natural science were confined to pinpointing the chemical and physical properties of substances (revealed through their interaction), describing and classifying living organisms.

2. Practice as the Basis of Knowledge

Knowledge is active not only because it has a purpose, but also because it is effected by man's transformatoin of reality, by his practical action on the surrounding world. In cognising his environment, man cannot and must not remain a mere observer of what is happening around him. If he

confines himself simply to observing or contemplating the object of his study, he will learn only some of its outward properties, which will tell him nothing of the object's essence. To reveal the essence of an object, it must be acted upon, placed in a system of relations and connections different from those characteristic of its natural state. By changing the natural state of the object of his study, man gradually penetrates its secrets, exposes its essence and expresses it in relevant ideal images. The practical transformation of reality is, therefore, a necessary condition for cognising it. Cognition may function and develop on the basis of practice alone, playing a decisive role in it.

Being the basis of knowledge, a necessary condition for the human mind to penetrate the essence of the objects and phenomena of the outside world, practice is the final goal and motive force of knowledge. Indeed, in order to function and develop production needs knowledge of the necessary aspects and connections of the fields of reality that are involved in people's practical activities and are subject to change in the interests of society. This knowledge, however, is acquired through cognising reality, chiefly through science. The latter's main objective is to provide society, especially production, with the knowledge they require in order to function and develop. Social practice sets science definite tasks. By solving them, science delves deeper and deeper into the world of phenomena, discovers ever new properties and connections, and thus develops. Engels

wrote: "If society has a technical need, that helps science forward more than ten universities."[1]

The history of science proves that the development of knowledge depends on practice, on the problems posed by practical necessity. Fields of scientific knowledge such as mechanics, hydrostatics and hydrodynamics developed rapidly in the period when practice raised the problem of devising suitable mechanical methods of pumping water from mines and lifting weights. Moreover, the study of electrical phenomena gained momentum only after it had been discovered that they could be used in practice. The same is true of nuclear research. The tremendous development of this field was caused by the discovery of practical uses for atomic energy.

Thus, practice exerts a decisive influence on knowledge and is the basis for its functioning and development.

Some pre-Marxian philosophers, including Hegel, recognised the decisive role of practice in cognition. In Hegel's view, the process of cognition runs through creative activity. For him, however, practice was but the thinking, creative activity of the idea that created particular concepts, and then the sensuous world, in the process of self-consciousness.

In reality, however, *practice is the material activity of people aimed at changing and transforming the surrounding world.* It includes, primarily, production activity which changes natural

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 502.

objects in order that they might satisfy the needs of society. But man changes not only nature. He also changes the life of society, the relations among people, various public institutions, and so forth. So, practice also includes the social activity of people, particularly the class struggle which ultimately alters the relations of production, and thus the entire life of society.

3. The Dialectical Way of Knowledge

Basing itself on practice, cognition is constantly moving from live contemplation to abstract thinking, and from there back to practice, as a criterion for the truth of the knowledge obtained.[1]

a) Live Contemplation

Live contemplation is a sensuous reflection of reality. It is effected through a direct perception by man's sense organs of the things and phenomena of the outside world. As distinct from passive contemplation, live contemplation presupposes active action on the object of knowledge, its purposeful transformation during this process.

Live contemplation is connected with sensation and perception as forms of the reflection of reality.

Sensation is a visual image of an object directly acting upon the sense organs. The action of an object on a sense organ irritates some nerve cells, this irritation being transmitted through centripetal

[1] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, pp. 170-172.

nerves to the cortex, some area of which is excited by it. The resultant centre of excitation underlies the realisation of the above action and the reflection of a certain property of the acting object as a corresponding image—colour, smell, sound, taste, shape, softness, hardness, and so on. Sensation is thus "a result of the action of matter on our sense-organs".[1] It is "a transformation of the energy of external excitation into the fact of consciousness".[2]

A sensation reflects only particular aspects or properties of an object, rather than the object as a whole. Since an object usually acts on the sense-organs through its many aspects, several different and inherently interconnected sensations emerge, rather than a single one, and add up to a more or less integral image of the acting object. This integral image is perception. So, *perception is an integral image that is formed in the human brain as a result of the action of an object on our sense-organs.*

As soon as an object ceases to act, perception disappears. The nerve connections underlying the perception do not disappear, however, and last for a certain time. As a result, later on man can reproduce in his consciousness the image of the object that acted on his sense-organs in the past. *This image is called notion or representation.*

Notion is not so rich and clear in content as perception—it reproduces only some of the prop-

[1] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 57.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 51.

erties inherent in the object that acted on the sense-organs. Nevertheless, it has some advantages over perception. The latter is always tied up with a particular object, it limits the cognitive activities of consciousness to the narrow confines of a given concrete case. In contrast, notion does not entail such a direct connection with the object; it makes it possible to cognise the latter in its absence, expanding thereby the scope of the cognitive activities of consciousness. Moreover, being the image of a concrete object or phenomenon, perception is always individual, single. Notion, on the other hand, may also be general. It may retain only what is repeated in a number of similar objects or phenomena. For example, besides the notion of a specific tree or man, we may have the notion of tree or man in general. Thus, as distinct from perception which binds consciousness to the single, the individual, notion breaks these narrow confines and allows consciousness to single out the general and use it in the relevant thinking processes.

The reflection of reality through notions extends beyond live contemplation confined to sensations and perceptions. The reflection of objective reality through sensations, perceptions and notions is known as sense knowledge. Live contemplation is not, therefore, identical to, but narrower than, sense knowledge.

Having discussed the main forms of sense knowledge we can define its specific features, the main one being that it links us directly to the outside world. Sensations and perceptions are the

result of a direct action by the objects of the outside world on the sense-organs. Besides, sense knowledge is visual, the surrounding world being reflected through visual images. Lastly, sense knowledge reflects only what is on the surface of phenomena, only the outward aspects of objects, which are, as a rule, changeable and fortuitous. Man, however, is interested in the stable and necessary aspects and connections and in the laws governing the action and development of material entities, for his practical activity is based on that which is inevitably repeated under relevant conditions and is necessary. These laws and that which is necessary are, however, concealed from direct perception, making up the inner content of phenomena. All this points to the inadequacy of sense knowledge and to the necessity of advancing to some new, more perfect forms, capable of reflecting the internal, the necessary, the laws manifesting themselves in the surrounding world. The forms of abstract thinking are such new forms of cognising objective reality.

b) Abstract Thinking

Before discussing the specific features of abstract thinking, we should define thinking in general and show what it is as a special social phenomenon.

Thinking is the isolation in consciousness of certain aspects or properties of the object under study, and their combination in specific groups in order to obtain new knowledge.

The solution of any mathematical problem may serve as an elementary example of thinking activity. Let us assume that we have to find out the number of pairs of shoes to be produced in a country in the next year, given a population of 200 million and the fact that every person wears out three pairs of shoes annually. Besides, the average annual population growth is 15 per thousand. When solving this problem, we single out certain thoughts, place them within the relevant system of connections (relations) and obtain new knowledge. Thus, we focus our attention on the total number of people living in the country (200 million), then on the annual growth rate. By connecting these two factors, we figure out the number of people that would live in the country in the following year (203 million). We tie up this new knowledge with the known annual per capita requirement of footwear and obtain a figure indicating the total footwear requirement for the entire population in the coming year. Thus, by isolating separate thoughts and tying them up in relevant combinations to obtain the knowledge we lack, we are thinking, and in the process we solve the problem.

Thinking emerged together with consciousness on the basis of man's labour activity. It was visual, and even object-oriented, in the initial stages in the development of the human race. In effecting certain thinking operations, the people of that time isolated and combined into new groups visual images, such as sensations, perceptions, notions that emerged in the course of the practical trans-

formation of the surrounding world, as well as the objects and phenomena encountered in everyday life. Later on, as production developed, man began to abstract from the sensuous, concrete and visual, and to isolate the general from the individual. On this basis he developed, first, general *notions*, and then *concepts–the ideal non-visual images reflecting the general, essential properties and connections of the objects and phenomena of the surrounding world.*

The emergence of concepts gave rise to *abstract thinking.* The latter is *the isolation and combination of concepts in order to obtain new knowledge.*

Concept is a qualitatively new form of the reflection of reality, differing markedly from the forms of *sense knowledge* discussed above. As distinct from the latter, concept is devoid of visuality. It is impossible to visualise, for instance, a chemical element, valency, patriotism, courage, democracy, etc. All these ideal images are thoughts expressing the understanding of a particular phenomenon. Moreover, sense images–sensation, perception, notion–reflect the external properties and connections of the objects and phenomena of the surrounding world, whereas concepts reflect the inner, essential properties inherent in them.

Concepts interact with each other in the thinking process and make up other forms of the reflection of reality, such as judgements and inferences.

Judgement is the simplest form of thinking. It reflects, through a definite interconnection be-

tween concepts or notions, the presence or absence of connections between objects and their properties. The following thoughts, for instance, are judgements: "man is a social being", "capitalism begets unemployment", "the proletariat in capitalist society is not the owner of the means of production". The first thought states that man and society are interconnected; the second states the connection between capitalism and unemployment; the third thought states that there is no connection between the proletariat and the ownership of the means of production in capitalist society.

Inference is a form of thinking representing a connection between judgements and engendering a new judgement that contains a new thought. The following reasoning may serve as an example of inference: "All the citizens of the Soviet Union enjoy the right to work and rest. Ivanov is a citizen of the Soviet Union. Ivanov enjoys the right to work and rest". The first two judgements are connected in such a way that a new judgement, containing a new thought, may be inferred.

By combining relevant concepts into judgements, and these into inferences, man is thinking, thus reproducing in his consciousness the necessary aspects and connections of reality and the essence of the object under study through a system of ideal images. The ability to penetrate the essence of a certain field of reality under study and the isolation of its inherent aspects and connections is a major feature of abstract thinking, distinguishing it from sense knowledge.

Another specific feature is the indirectness of reflection. Abstract thinking involves concepts, judgements and inferences, and is not directly linked with the object under study. It deals with sense data about this object, obtained at the sense stage of cognition. It is these data that serve as a mediating link separating abstract thinking from reality and at the same time connecting them.

c) The Interconnection Between Sense and Rational Knowledge

Man cognises the surrounding world by way of live contemplation and abstract thinking, but what is the role played by each of these ways? Sensualists believed that sense experience was most important in cognition. Abstract thinking, they maintained, is subsidiary, adding virtually nothing to the knowledge obtained in the process of sense cognition. In their view, the human mind does not contain anything new to add to sense data. Rationalists (from the Latin *ratio*–reason) held the opposite view. They believed that abstract thinking, reason, rather than the senses were paramount. The senses, they said, distort reality, mislead us, therefore they should not be relied upon in the process of cognising the truth. Reason is the only unbiased judge and the sole way of cognising the truth.

But what is a true answer to this problem? Which of the two ways of cognition is decisive? Neither sense knowledge, nor abstract thinking, if

taken separately, are capable of ensuring cognition of the essence of an object. Sense knowledge is confined to noting that which lies on the surface of phenomena, but is unable to fathom their essence. Abstract thinking, on the other hand, can penetrate the essence of phenomena, but it does not possess the data about the object necessary for reproducing its essence in the mind. These data are provided by sense knowledge. It is obvious, therefore, that sense knowledge and abstract thinking should not be counterposed. The essence of phenomena can be cognised only by their joint efforts.

The interconnection between the sensuous and the rational in knowledge is expressed not only in that they supplement and presuppose one another, but also in that they interpenetrate one another. Live contemplation involves thinking activity in the process of which concrete visual images, notions in particular, are being used.

By perceiving certain properties of the object under study, man brings them within the scope of his concepts and thus becomes aware of them. But to bring a particular case within the range of a general concept and, on this basis, draw a conclusion that contains new knowledge concerning the object of thought, is merely to make a deduction, which is a form of thought. Moreover, by making a point of the object's properties thus revealed, man compares it with other objects known to him and establishes the extent to which it is similar to or different from them. This process also takes the form of inference.

Thus sense knowledge that reflects the object under study through sensations, perceptions and notions, is intrinsically tied up with thinking, including it as one of its necessary aspects.

Abstract thinking is not absolutely free of visual images either. Although it deals with abstract concepts, it must keep within its range the concrete object whose essence it has to reveal and express in a system of abstract concepts.

To sum up, sense knowledge and abstract thinking are intrinsically interconnected and interdependent, penetrating and changing into one another as they function and develop.

d) Empirical and Theoretical Knowledge

When the process of cognition is viewed as the inter-penetration of the sensuous and the rational, of live contemplation and abstract thinking, the necessity arises for distinguishing between empirical and theoretical levels of knowledge.

Empirical knowledge deals with phenomena, with that which lies on the surface of an object, i.e. with its external aspects and connections. The sensuous forms of reflecting reality–sensations, perceptions, notions–play a major role here. The concepts, judgements and inferences used at this level of knowledge are closely linked with sense data, their processing in the mind: fixation, analysis, grouping, and the establishment of the general and specific properties of the objects under study.

Empirical knowledge describes the behaviour of the object under study, takes note of the

changes it undergoes, and makes general statements on the basis of the data thus obtained. True, these statements are of little value for science and practical experience, inasmuch as they merely state what is observed experimentally, being unable to explain why it happens and whether it necessarily happens under given conditions. The latter can be established only by theoretical knowledge.

Although theoretical knowledge develops on the basis of empirical knowledge, it does not confine itself to the superficial study of phenomena but penetrates their nature, exposing the causes behind these phenomena. Basing itself on empirical data, it seeks to reveal the necessary aspects and connections of the object under study and the laws governing its functioning and development, thus providing an explanation for the phenomena observed. So the task facing theoretical knowledge is "to resolve the visible, merely external movement into the true intrinsic movement. . .".[1]

Theoretical knowledge uses concepts, judgements and inferences to reproduce in the mind the essence of the object under study through their interconnection.

e) Practice as the Criterion of Truth

Different philosophers gave different solutions to the problem of a criterion of truth. Some declared clarity of thought to be such a criterion (Descartes), others—sensuousness, the direct per-

[1] K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 3, p. 313.

ception of a particular phenomenon (Feuerbach), yet others–universality (the Machist Bogdanov) or utility (Dewey). None of these factors, however, can break the confines of our subjective judgement, and they are therefore unable to distinguish between truth and falsity. Indeed, clarity of thought, for instance, shows that the subject understands a certain phenomenon, but it does not necessarily mean that the latter corresponds to reality. An erroneous view can also be clear. A direct perception of a particular phenomenon may also be erroneous, distorted. An object, for instance, seen at a great distance seems to be smaller than at close quarters. In reality, however, it is the same. Moreover, recognition of the truth of a certain proposition by many people does not exclude the possibility of it being false either, in so far as many people may be mistaken. Many people, for instance, believe in the existence of the devil, hell, and paradise. The use of utility or belief as a means of verifying truth will lead us to the same conclusions. A false statement may be useful for certain people. The idea, for instance, that the capitalist state expresses the interests of all classes is useful for the bourgeoisie. This, however, contradicts reality, inasmuch as the bourgeois state expresses the interests of the exploiting classes, the bourgeoisie in particular, and is spearheaded against the working people.

How, then, is it possible to establish whether an idea is true or false? The truth of our knowledge must be established through practice. Practice alone can give a final answer to the question of

what is false and what is true. Marxists were the first to advance and develop the idea that practice is the criterion of truth. Marx wrote: "The question whether objective (*gegenständliche*) truth can be attributed to human thinking is not a question of theory but is a *practical* question. In practice man must prove the truth, that is, the reality and power... of his thinking."[1]

Indeed, in order to establish the truth of an idea it is necessary to perform certain practical actions based on this idea. If the results are as expected, the idea is true, otherwise it is false. To establish, for instance, the truth of the statement that heat may be converted into mechanical motion, we build a steam engine which operates on the principle of conversion of thermal into mechanical energy. The operation of the engine shows that the above statement is true and corresponds to reality.

f) Objective Truth. The Interconnection Between Absolute and Relative Truths

Knowledge obtained in the process of empirical and theoretical cognition becomes true only after it has been confirmed in practice. But what is true knowledge? How does it differ from false knowledge?

The knowledge that corresponds to reality and reflects it is true knowledge.

True knowledge that corresponds to reality "does not depend either on a human being or on

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 13.

humanity. . .".[1] People cannot arbitrarily, at their will, change the content of true propositions. The proposition, for instance, that electric energy may be converted into heat and mechanical motion, while the latter two may be converted into electricity, cannot be changed by people, because this proposition is true, and reflects reality.

For this reason, objective truth may be defined as follows. *Objective truth is the content of our knowledge, which reflects reality and therefore does not depend either on a human being or on humanity.*

This definition does not imply, however, that truth cannot change at all, that it is external, as the metaphysicists maintained.

Although people cannot change the content of truth at will, this content invariably undergoes changes in the process of the development of social knowledge and practice. These changes stem primarily from the fact that the process of cognition does not stand still–it is continuously developing on the basis of social experience. During this process people penetrate ever deeper into the surrounding world, discover ever new aspects and connections of it, thereby clarifying, supplementing and enriching their knowledge and making it correspond more fully to reality.

In 1858 the German physicist Julius Plücker, for instance, passed electric current through a tube containing a rarefied gas and discovered so-called cathode rays. Some time later (1869), Johann Hit-

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 122.

torf established that these rays travelled in a straight line, deflected in a magnetic field, could be absorbed by solid bodies, etc. Still later (1879), the British physicist William Crookes put forward the idea that cathode rays were a flux of tiny particles detached from the cathode and travelling at immense speed. According to Crookes, these particles had a negative charge and were part of all atoms. John Thompson experimentally confirmed the idea advanced by Crookes (1897). The Irish physicist George Johnstone Stoney suggested that the particles be called electrons.

The above example shows how our knowledge of the electron continuously changed and became more accurate and fuller in the process of the development of knowledge. This is a rather vivid demonstration that objective truth is *relative,* and that its content depends on the level of development of social knowledge and practice.

Objective truth cannot remain unchanged also because the reality reflected by it does not stand still, but is changing and developing all the time. But if the object of reflection changes and passes from one qualitative state into another, if some of its properties and connections disappear and new ones emerge, our knowledge of this object cannot remain unchanged. In order to be true, this knowledge must necessarily change, it must be supplemented by new knowledge and brought in line with changed reality. Our knowledge of the Russian proletariat, for instance, could not remain unchanged after it had carried out a socialist revolution, established its dictatorship and built

socialism. To make it correspond to reality we have to supplement this knowledge by new data pertaining to the social position of the working class and its place and role in socialist society.

Moreover, objective truth remains such only within certain limits and under definite conditions. Any extrapolation of or changes in the specific conditions result in true knowledge turning into false. Thus, the proposition that socialist revolution may be made victorious by peaceful means is not true always and for every country. It is only true for those countries where corresponding conditions have matured, such as: the proletariat has a real possibility to win over the majority of the population, win elections to the country's legislative bodies, form its government, and begin the socialist transformation of social relations peacefully, provided the bourgeoisie does not put up an armed resistance. This indicates that truth is always concrete.

To sum up, objective truth is relative; it necessarily changes along with the development of social knowledge and changes in reflected reality and the conditions of its existence.

The fact that truth is not permanent or external and that it necessarily changes, depending on the level of development of social knowledge, does not, however, exclude its objectivity and independence of a human being and humanity. On the contrary, the changeability of truth is a condition for ensuring its objectivity, inasmuch as it contributes to making our knowledge conform more fully to reality.

The development of our knowledge of thermal radiation is a good example, showing how changes in the truth contribute to greater objectivity. In ancient times people noticed that a flame emits heat rays. At first they thought that thermal radiation was connected with the process of burning alone. Later, however, it was also discovered in incandescent bodies, and still later (the end of the 17th century) it was found in heated bodies. In the 18th century, some scientists (Pierre Prevost, for instance, in 1791) came to the conclusion that thermal radiation is a characteristic feature of all bodies, irrespective of their temperature. It was also established (by Johann H. Lambert in 1779) that heat rays travel and are reflected in the same way as light rays, and that the amount of heat rays emitted by a body is proportional to the increase in its temperature (John Leslie). It was further observed that bodies radiating heat extensively, also absorb it to a greater extent, and vice versa. Lastly, Herschel established in 1800 that heat is distributed unevenly in the different parts of the spectrum–the heat effect is especially pronounced in the part that corresponds to the red colour and diminishes towards the violet colour. This shows that our knowledge of heat radiation changed as social cognition developed. But this, of course, did not make it less objective, nor did it refute the truth of the belief shared by the ancients that a flame emits heat rays. Changes in our knowledge of thermal radiation made it increasingly true, an increasingly objective reflection of reality.

Lastly, if our knowledge is always relative and invariably changes during the development of social cognition and practice, does this not prove that absolute truth does not and cannot exist? Relativists draw exactly this conclusion. Dialectical materialists, however, do not believe that the relativity of our knowledge indicates that *absolute truth* is non-existent. In the relative they see an element of the absolute. According to dialectical materialism, objective truth is relative and absolute simultaneously. Inasmuch as it correctly reflects the particular aspects and connections of reality, it is absolute; inasmuch, however, as this reflection is always incomplete and does not and cannot embrace the whole content of an object (which is inexhaustible), it is relative.

Thus, although our knowledge is always relative, this does not mean that it is not objective and absolute. The existence of absolute truth is necessarily connected with the objectivity of our knowledge. "To acknowledge objective truth," Lenin wrote, "i.e. truth not dependent upon man and mankind, is, in one way or another, to recognise absolute truth."[1]

Absolute truth exists through relative truths, through the aspects of relative truth that reflect reality. As cognition and social practice develop, the number of these aspects increases. At the same time absolute truth, being a continuously growing sum of relative truths, is becoming ever fuller. But it can never be complete, because the world is

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 133.

infinite in its diversity and therefore inexhaustible. The chain making up absolute truth will be supplemented with new links of relative truths, which will bring us closer to an increasingly full (and in this sense absolute) reflection of reality, but without making it possible to exhaust it.

4. Forms and Methods of Scientific Knowledge (Cognition)

By cognising the surrounding world, man develops and uses the relevant forms and methods of reflecting reality. He resorts to various types of judgements, inferences and concepts and is guided by the norms and principles of cognitive activity. The forms and methods of cognition used by man reflect the aspects and connections of reality and the laws governing the development of social knowledge and practice.

A method of cognition is a totality of the requirements and principles man should follow in studying a certain sphere of reality. These requirements are based on certain universal aspects and connections of reality and the laws governing the development and functioning of cognition.

Some of these requirements are applicable to any stage in the development of cognition, to all spheres of scientific analysis, while others are applicable to one stage in the development of cognition, to one field of science. For this reason there are general and particular methods of scientific cognition.

a) Observation

Observation is the purposeful, deliberate perception of phenomena related to the object under study. It presupposes the preliminary setting of an objective, definition of ways of achieving it, availability of a plan for watching the object, use of apparatus to extend the possibility of perceiving the object's qualities and recording them. The extent to which observation is successful and fruitful also depends on how well the observer is versed in the given field of phenomena and on how well he is prepared and organised.

b) Experiment

Experiment is a research method presupposing a corresponding change in an object or its reproduction under conditions specially created for this purpose.

In contrast to observation, where the subject does not interfere with the phenomenon under study, but confines himself to recording its natural state, experiment involves the subject's active interference in the field of phenomena under study, disruption of the natural state of things, and the placing of an object under different, specially created conditions. The researcher thus compels the object to react to the new conditions and to reveal new properties not observed in its natural state. Moreover, by changing these conditions, he traces how these and other properties of the object change and thus obtains plentiful data on

the object's behaviour under different circumstances.

By making an experiment, the researcher proceeds from the information he has on the given field of phenomena, and on this basis choses the ways and means of conducting the experiment. Besides, he is guided by certain assumptions that are to be either confirmed or refuted by the experiment. In other words, although experiment involves new concrete data about the object under study, it entails not only the sensuous forms of cognition, but also abstract thinking.

c) Comparison

Comparison is the way of revealing the likeness to or difference from other phenomena of the phenomenon under study. It is a necessary method of research widely used at different stages in the development of cognition. Scientific knowledge is inconceivable without it.

Indeed, the aim of science is to reveal what is common and recurrent in phenomena, thus penetrating their essence. By comparing the object under study with other objects, and data obtained under certain conditions at a certain time with data obtained under other conditions at another time, we establish what is common. Comparison helps in revealing that which is recurrent in phenomena and in formulating on this basis some common propositions as regards the object under study.

d) Hypothesis

Hypothesis is a major form of thinking linking theoretical with empirical knowledge and ensuring a transition from reflecting the external aspects of phenomena to reflecting their internal aspects.

Hypothesis is an assumption, based on established facts, of the cause underlying certain phenomena.

A hypothesis is advanced in the following way. First, all phenomena relating to the object under study are thoroughly examined. Through observation and experiment, data are collected on the object's perceivable properties, their changes and connections with other phenomena. Analysis of these data makes it possible to assume a likely cause behind the properties observed. A number of conclusions are made on the basis of the assumption, which are then verified. If a certain assumed conclusion does not bring about the anticipated result under the corresponding circumstances, the hypothesis is proved false. If, however, all the anticipated consequences are observed, the hypothesis is recognised as scientifically sound. Later on, as it is further substantiated and confirmed by experience, the hypothesis becomes a scientific theory and authentic knowledge.

The process of building up a hypothesis and transforming it into authentic knowledge may be easily traced from the explanation of the fact that the radioactivity of a substance exposed to neutrons increases in the presence of some light substances.

Bruno Pontecorvo and Edoardo Amaldi noticed in their experiments that the amount of radioactivity acquired by a substance exposed to radiation depends on surrounding objects. For example, when a silver cylinder was exposed to radiation in a lead box its radioactivity was negligible; when, however, it was exposed on a wooden support, its radioactivity increased significantly. When analysing the circumstances of this phenomenon, Enrico Fermi made the following assumption as regards the reason for the greater radioactivity of a substance when exposed to radiation in the vicinity of light bodies.

Inside a substance, a neutron collides with a nucleus and loses part of its energy. The amount of energy it loses in every particular case depends, however, on what nucleus–heavy or light–it collides with. If it collides with a heavy nucleus, such as the nucleus of the lead atom, it bounces off at virtually the same speed, i.e. it loses very little energy. If, however, it collides with a light nucleus, such as that of the hydrogen atom, it bounces off, having transmitted to it part of its energy, at a slower speed. It follows that the lighter the nucleus, the more energy is lost by the neutron upon colliding with it. But a change in the neutron's speed increases its chances of being captured by the nuclei of the atoms of the substance through which it passes, since, when travelling at a slower speed, it interects with nuclei for a longer time. So, when light bodies, such as wood containing a great amount of hydrogen, are close to a substance exposed to radiation, neutrons

passing through them slow down and are captured by atomic nuclei more frequently, which results in increased radioactivity.

Having disclosed the assumed reason for the greater radioactivity of a substance exposed to neutron radiation, Fermi made a corresponding conclusion–the radioactivity of substances exposed to neutron radiation must increase in the presence of any light body.

In order to verify this conclusion, Fermi decided to expose silver to neutron radiation in paraffin, which contains far more hydrogen atoms than wood that increases its radioactivity in the presence of silver. The silver exposed to radiation in paraffin acquired still more radioactivity than when it was exposed on a wooden support. This fact showed that Fermi's assumption was true.

Hypothesis plays an exceptionally important part in the development of scientific knowledge. This is not fortuitous, because it is a form of transition from description to explanation of the object under study, from recording its external manifestations to reproducing their inner causes.

e) Analogy

Analogy is another form of thinking that makes possible the transition from empirical to theoretical knowledge.

Analogy is an inference making it possible to draw conclusions about the similarity of objects in certain of their properties on the basis of the similarity of their other properties.

Analogy is normally used as a form of thinking in dealing with a phenomenon that is more or less studied and resembles other phenomena not yet studied. Given this resemblance, one can assume that a phenomenon not yet studied is governed by laws inherent in the first phenomenon. This assumption is based on the fact that properties and relations inherent in objects are connected and interdependent, so the presence of some properties and relations presupposes the existence of other properties and relations.

Inference by analogy plays an important part in scientific progress. Many major scientific discoveries were made by transferring laws intrinsic to one sphere of phenomena to another. The Dutch physicist Christian Huygens, for example, concluded that light had a wave form on the basis of its resemblance, in many ways, to sound. Krönig compared the motion of gas molecules with the motion of resilient balls, established some features common to both processes and on this basis calculated gas pressure. A similarity between the flow of fluid in a pipe and of electrons in a conductor helped in developing the theory of electric current. Lastly, the discovery of a certain resemblance between reflective processes in a living organism and some physical processes was conducive to the development of cybernetic devices.

f) Model-building

The close connection between empirical and theoretical knowledge and the transition from the

first to the second are also effected through another method of scientific analysis–model-building.

Model-building is reproduction of certain properties and connections of the object under study in another specially created object–a model–in order to study them more closely.

A geographical map which reproduces certain properties and connections of the Earth's surface is an ideal example of a model. Cybernetic machines imitating the properties of the human brain, and structural formulae reproducing the properties and connections of the molecules or atoms of a certain substance, are also models.

Model-building is very similar to analogy. Here, too, the discovery of certain properties inherent in one object–the model–provides grounds for concluding that the same properties are intrinsic to another object–the object of cognition.

The advantage of model-building is that it makes it possible to single out certain properties of the object under study, conceive them in their pure form and study them in the absence of the original. This is vitally important whenever access to the object or action upon it are hampered by certain circumstances or are not possible at all.

There are material and ideal (logical) models. Material models are objects specially made or selected by man to physically reproduce certain properties, connections and processes inherent in the object under study. Material models exist in reality, function and develop according to some objective laws that exist outside and independently of the human mind. A model of a house,

a bridge or a dam, for example, is a material model.

Ideal models are mental constructions, images, theoretical schemes that reproduce in an ideal form the properties and connections of the object under study. These models are formed with the help of particular symbols, figures and other material means. As distinct from material models, ideal models do not reproduce the physical state and properties of the object under study–they merely copy or reflect them in the corresponding mental constructions.

The role of model-building in knowledge and practice has especially increased now that cybernetics and mathematical logic have developed.

g) Induction and Deduction

Another form of thinking–induction–is widely used at the empirical stage of knowledge.

Induction is inference in the process of which a general conclusion is made on the basis of knowledge of particular cases in relation to all phenomena of the given class.

As a rule, knowledge obtained through induction is only a probability and is problematic, because a general conclusion is drawn here on the basis of a simple repetition of a particular property in all the phenomena under study. The presence of a property in these cases certainly does not mean that it will necessarily be observed in other phenomena not yet studied. It may or may not be. It will necessarily be observed if it is law-gov-

erned; it may not be if it is not connected with the nature of the phenomena of a given class and stems from external circumstances. Induction, however, cannot establish whether this property is necessary or accidental. Other methods of scientific cognition are required for this, such as deduction which is connected with the theoretical level of knowledge.

Deduction is inference in which a new thought is logically developed from certain propositions that are a general rule for all phenomena of a given class. The following inference may serve as an example of deduction. "The state is an instrument used by the ruling class in society to suppress its class enemies. The bourgeoisie is the ruling class in capitalist society. It follows that, in capitalist society, the state is an instrument used by the bourgeoisie to suppress its class enemies."

Deduction is very important in a scientific substantiation of propositions reflecting various aspects and connections of the objects under study that cannot be perceived directly.

Although induction and deduction are two independent forms of thinking, they are intrinsically connected, presuppose one another and cannot ensure the development of knowledge in isolation from each other. By generalising accumulated empirical knowledge, induction paves the way for various assumptions to be made concerning the causes of the phenomena under study and the existence of a certain necessary connection, and for these assumptions to be verified. Deduction, on the other hand, by theoretically substantiating

the conclusions drawn through induction, sublates their problematic nature and makes them authentic knowledge. "Induction and deduction," Engels wrote, "belong together as necessarily as synthesis and analysis. Instead of one-sidedly lauding one to the skies at the expense of the other, we should seek to apply each of them in its place, and that can only be done by bearing in mind that they belong together, that they supplement each other."[1]

h) The Method of Ascension from the Abstract to the Concrete

The abstract is a one-sided reflection in men's consciousness of the object under study. The concrete is an integral reproduction of the object (1) as a system of abstract concepts or (2) in a sensuously visual form. The first reproduces the object as a unity of its inner, necessary aspects and expresses its essence; the second reproduces the object's external aspects and is a superficial notion of the whole.

Ascension from the abstract to the concrete is an important form of theoretical knowledge. It can lead to the reproduction in man's consciousness of the essence of the object under study through abstract concepts.

Hegel was the first to develop this method and use it in constructing his philosophical system. The Hegelian method of ascension from the abstract to the concrete, however, was not scientifically grounded, inasmuch as it expressed the

[1] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 228.

development of pure thought that existed prior to nature and man, i.e. was idealist in its essence. Marx developed this method on a materialist and scientific basis in his *Capital*. According to this method, cognition should start from the abstract, rather than the concrete whole, with analysis of the concepts reflecting particular, very simple aspects and connections of the object under study. Not any very simple abstract concept, however, can serve as a point of departure for studying the whole. This can only be done by the concept that reflects the main aspect or relation of the whole under study. The main aspect (relation) directly affects all other aspects of the whole. For this reason, by taking the main aspect as the point of departure and by viewing it in its development, we can explain the emergence and peculiarities of the other aspects of the whole, and deduce them from changes in the main aspect (relation). By tracing these changes one by one, and explaining one aspect of the whole after another, we shall reproduce in our mind, through a system of concepts, the necessary interconnection and interdependence of all these aspects, thereby arriving at concrete knowledge of the essence of the object under study.

Marx's analysis of the capitalist socio-economic system in his *Capital* may serve as an example of cognition through ascension from the abstract to the concrete. Marx took commodity as the initial, main aspect and explained, on the basis of the development of commodity relations, the formation of all other aspects and connections of the capitalist

system. He mentally reproduced the essence of capitalist society through a system of abstract concepts reflecting these aspects and connections.

The method of ascension from the abstract to the concrete is applicable at that stage of knowledge when the whole under study has to a certain extent been examined, when its general aspects and connections have been isolated and expressed in the relevant abstract concepts and definitions. This, however, can be achieved at the stage of knowledge developing from the sensuously concrete to the abstract. For this reason the above form of knowledge should precede the development from the abstract to the concrete.

i) The Historical and the Logical in Knowledge

The concept "historical" means objective reality in a state of motion and development. The concept "logical means the necessary connection of thoughts reflecting surrounding reality in man's consciousness.

The historical is primary to the logical, which reflects the former. As such, the logical may or may not correspond to the historical. It does so when the interrelation of thoughts reproduces the actual historical process. It does not correspond to the historical when the interrelation of thoughts does not reflect the history of an object, when, for example, the train of thought proceeds in the opposite direction to the development of history.

Saying that the logical corresponds to the historical does not mean that this correspondence is

complete. The logical does not fully coincide with the historical. "History often proceeds by leaps and zigzags. . . ."[1] The logical must not and cannot reproduce all these zigzags of history. Its sole objective is to reflect the necessary changes, the necessary tendency to pass from one qualitative state to another.

The correspondence of the logical to the historical is an essential aspect of the dialectical method of cognition, particularly the method of ascension from the abstract to the concrete. We have already noted that, according to the method of ascension from the abstract to the concrete, a study begins by finding the general, main aspect or relation. The study traces changes in the given aspect or relation, making it possible to explain the formation and transformation of the other aspects of the whole. The thinking process reproduces connections and relations that somehow reflect the actual formation of the essence of the object under study. As a result, the logical development of thought corresponds to the historical development of the object. True, this correspondence relates only to necessary connections. The logical thus reproduces the historical that is free of fortuity. Engels stressed the agreement between the logical and the historical when proceeding from the abstract to the concrete. He wrote: "The chain of thought must begin with the same thing with which this history begins, and its further course will be nothing else but the reflection of

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 513.

the historical course in abstract and theoretically consistent form; a corrected reflection but corrected according to laws furnished by the real course of history itself. . . ."[1]

j) Analysis and Synthesis

In the process of cognising the surrounding world, man constantly singles out in his mind certain aspects of the object he studies and synthesises them into combinations in order to obtain new knowledge. *The mental division of the object of cognition into its separate parts (properties) is analysis; the mental combination of the separated parts (properties) into one whole is synthesis.*

The forms and methods of research change as knowledge develops and passes from one stage to another. This holds true for both analysis and synthesis. They do not always remain the same—they change as cognition develops.

So-called *direct* analysis and synthesis take place during the initial stages in the development of cognition. They are characterised by a direct, purely mechanical breakdown of the whole under study into separate aspects or parts and a direct, mechanical union of the separate aspects or parts into particular combinations. Here, analysis is effected irrespective of synthesis, and vice versa. There is no intrinsic link between the two. This type of analysis and synthesis ensures initial familiarisation with the object, but goes no further.

A change in cognition from recording the prop-

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 514.

erties and connections observed on the surface of phenomena to revealing the causes underlying them, gives rise to a new, reflexive type of analysis and synthesis.

Reflexive analysis is not confined to a mechanical breakdown of a whole into its component parts, but rather involves breaking it up into cause and effect. Reflexive synthesis is not a mechanical combination of separated parts–it is a combination reflecting a cause-and-effect connection. This connection is a pivot for the analytical and synthetical activity of the brain. It directs and unites this activity.

The above type of analysis and synthesis helps explain separate parts of the whole under study and reveal their nature and causes. It is unable, however, to reproduce all its aspects and connections in their natural interdependence, i.e. reproduce its essence in the mind. A need for a new type of analysis and synthesis arises at the stage of cognising the essence of objects. This new type is called progressive or *system-structural* analysis and synthesis.

A characteristic feature of system-structural analysis and synthesis is that the break-up of the whole into separate parts and the combining of the parts into one whole corresponds to the actual breakdown of a material entity into separate phenomena, qualitatively definite aspects and properties and to the actual, natural interconnection of these aspects and properties. In this case, analysis and synthesis form a natural unity and are effected at one and the same time. An analytical

action here is also a synthetical one. For example, the deduction of such phenomena of bourgeois society as money, surplus value, labour force, and capital from the development of commodity relations is not only analysis, but also synthesis, not only a breakdown of the object under study into its separate manifestations, but also a reproduction of the whole system of connections arising between these phenomena.

Lenin's study of the imperialist stage of capitalism may serve as an example of the use of the above types of analysis and synthesis in scientific knowledge. In the course of this study Lenin analysed primarily available material on imperialism and singled out the separate aspects distinguishing it from the pre-monopoly stage. He found the following characteristic features of imperialism: the concentration of capital and the formation of monopolies, a change in the role of banks, the emergence of finance capital, the export of capital, the division of the world among capitalist countries. At this stage of his study Lenin combined the characteristic features of imperialism he had singled out into one whole, not in the sequence reflecting their natural necessary interdependence, but in that in which they had been treated in the economic studies he analysed. In this case Lenin used direct analysis and synthesis.

Lenin used reflexive analysis and synthesis to expose the cause of a certain feature of the imperialist stage of development and to define its nature. This type of analysis and synthesis enabled him to establish, for instance, that monopoly arises

as a result of excessive concentration of production.

After explaining the specific properties of imperialism he had singled out, Lenin found the main determining aspect underlying all the other properties of imperialism: the emergence and domination of monopolies. This is the basis underlying the development of the imperialist essence of capitalism. It is, as Lenin put it, the general and main law of the given stage of capitalism.[1]

Lenin took monopoly as his point of departure, traced its development and reproduced the essence of imperialism in a system of economic concepts. He pointed out that the appearance of monopoly in production resulted in the elimination of the predominance of free competition and made it possible to ensure approximate accounting of production, markets, raw material sources and their division among monopoly associations. The emergence of banking monopolies turned the banks from modest intermediaries into almighty managers of "almost the whole of the money capital of all the capitalists and small businessmen...".[2] This led to the merger of banks and industry and the rise of finance capital, the domination of the financial oligarchy, the formation of surplus capital in some countries and the consequent export of capital to other countries, which has virtually resulted in the division of the world into spheres of influence among the largest capitalist countries.

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[1] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, pp. 200-01.
[2] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 210.

Taking monopoly as a basis for deducing the features of the imperialist stage in the development of capitalism, Lenin singled out certain particular aspects of the whole under study and put them within the context of their necessary interconnection and interdependence that express the actual essence of imperialism. Any train of thought here is both analytic and synthetic, i.e. both the breakdown of the whole into separate aspects and the combination of the separate aspects into one comprehensive whole. All this indicates that, at this stage of his research, Lenin used system-structural analysis and synthesis.

The above example shows that each of the types of analysis and synthesis discussed is connected with a particular stage in the development of knowledge and has its own essential sphere of use.

Chapter VI

CATEGORIES OF MATERIALIST DIALECTICS

1. The Concept of Category

In the process of cognising objective reality, people form concepts, through which they express and record the reflected properties and connections of the objects and phenomena of the surrounding world and which are ideal images of these objects and phenomena. *Concepts reflecting the most essential and fundamental aspects and connections in a field of phenomena are called categories.* Each science has its own categories. The categories of political economy, for instance, are: commodity, money, value, surplus value, labour force, profit, etc.; the categories of biology are: organism, medium, assimilation, dissimilation, heredity, species, genus, etc.; the categories of juridical science are: law, legal norm, act, legal relation, legal offence, etc. Philosophy, too, has its categories. As distinct from the categories of special sciences, philosophical categories reflect not merely the most essential properties and connections, but universal properties and connections, i.e. those inherent in all the phenomena of reality and knowledge. Philosophical categories are universal concepts applicable to any field of reality. They include, for instance, such concepts as the indi-

vidual and the general, quantity and quality, cause and effect, content and form, necessity and accident (chance), law, essence and phenomenon, and contradiction.

Categories did not all appear simultaneously in the course of history. Each of them is connected with an absolutely definite stage in the development of knowledge. Categories record the universal aspects and relations revealed at a certain stage of development, and reflect the peculiarities of this stage, being support points that enabled man to rise above nature. In other words, categories that reflect the universal aspects and connections of the outside world are, at the same time, stages in the development of knowledge, moments marking the passage of knowledge from one stage to another. Lenin wrote: "Man is confronted with a *web* of natural phenomena. Instinctive man, the savage, does not distinguish himself from nature. Conscious man does distinguish, categories are stages of distinguishing, i.e. of congnising the world. . . ."[1]

Besides, the categories of dialectics are also forms of thinking. They serve as a medium for comprehending the actual material obtained in the course of scientific research and the practical transformation of reality. The most essential characteristics of an object are revealed during the mental processing of scientific data. Specifically, when we examine data in the light of the categories of the general and the particular, we

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 93.

establish the identity and distinctions of the object we are studying in comparison to other objects; when we view them in the light of the categories of causality and necessity, we establish the object's causal dependence and its necessary and accidental aspects and connections; and when we analyse them from the standpoint of the categories of quantity and quality, we discover the object's quantitative and qualitative characteristics and under certain conditions also their interrelationship.

Since categories reflect and record the universal aspects and connections of reality, i.e. the universal forms of being, they make up the content of dialectics; since they are also the points of departure or stages in the process of cognition, they are part of the theory of knowledge; moreover, since they are forms of thinking, they are objects of study for dialectical logic.

2. The Interconnection of Categories

According to the theory of dialectical materialism, material entities (things, objects) are universally interconnected and interdependent. They constantly interact with one another, interpenetrate and, under certain conditions, pass into one another. For this reason the concepts through which man cognises the surrounding world must be interconnected in a law-governed way. They must be flexible to the point where they can change into one another. Without this they cannot reflect reality. This is why we must study cate-

gories not separately, not alongside one another, but in their natural interconnection and interdependence, as the necessary links of one logical system in which each category has its own definite place.

The problem of categories was thoroughly studied by Hegel. As distinct from his predecessors, Hegel put categories on an historical footing, presented them in motion and development, in their dialectical interconnection and interdependence. True, Hegel did this within the confines of idealism, applying his theory to the development of pure thought, the Absolute Idea, that existed somewhere outside and independently of man and the material world. The fallacy of the point of departure in developing the system of categories inevitably influenced the result. Hegel's idealistic approach to categories gave rise to a multitude of artificial constructions that distorted reality. Even so, Hegel succeeded in developing a system of categories reproducing quite a number of deep universal laws and connections and the essence of dialectics.

It was Marxist philosophy, however, that supplied a consistently materialist and scientific solution to the problem of the interconnection of categories. Marx thoroughly developed it for political economy in his *Capital* and Lenin applied it to philosophy in his *Philosophical Notebooks.*

Lenin viewed categories as the universal forms for reflecting reality and stages in the development of social knowledge and practice. He deduced

their interconnection from the laws governing being and knowledge and considered that their relationship reflected the relationship of the universal aspects and connections of reality, expressing thereby the necessary development of knowledge from lower to higher stages.

The appearance of every new category is conditioned by development of knowledge. It emerges because knowledge penetrates ever deeper into the world of phenomena, thus exposing new universal aspects and connections which no longer correspond to existing categories and require new categories in which to be expressed and recorded. Once it has emerged, a new category enters into necessary relations or connections with existing categories, and thus takes its specific place in the totality of knowledge, the place provided by the continuous course of cognition. If categories are arranged in sequence of emergence in the process of the development of knowledge and social practice, we can determine their necessary interrelationship and interconnection.

Let us briefly consider the sequence by which man comprehended the universal aspects and connections of his environment, and also the passage of cognition from one category to another.

In contrast to animals, man begins to distinguish himself from his environment and to comprehend his specific being, which differs from that of the outside world. Having comprehended his being and the being of the outside world, man also comprehends his separateness, his certain isolation, just like the separateness and isolation of

the objects of the outside world. People developed the concept *separate* (a separate object, phenomenon or thing) to express this separateness of being.

Alongside comprehension of his isolation and certain degree of independence, man becomes aware of his *connection* with the outside world and the interconnection of objects in his environment. As a living creature, man needs food, drink, shelter, means of defence, and so on. The satisfaction of these and other needs presupposes man's intrinsic connection with the outside world and the use of certain natural objects.

The interconnection of objects, however, presupposes their interaction and, consequently, a certain change in them, i.e. *motion.* Since interconnection is inherently tied up with motion, man, having comprehended the interconnection of objects, had to comprehend that these objects change, i.e. they are in motion.

As cognition passed from the separate to the interconnection, interaction and motion of separate objects and bodies, man comprehended other universal aspects and connections of reality, specifically the individual and the general.

Man perceived each separate object he encountered for the first time in his practical activities as the only one of its kind, as something he had not seen before, i.e. the individual. As he discovered other objects that satisfied his particular need, he passed over (both practically and mentally) from one (single) object to several objects, to "the many". Comparison of these many objects

with one another, both practically and mentally, revealed their identity (similarity) which underlay the formation of general notions and then *general* concepts.

Quality and quantity are cognised at the same stage. When man perceives a separate object as the single and the only one of its kind, and seeks to comprehend what it is like, he reflects it from the point of view of *quality*. Inasmuch as the object in this case is considered as such, in itself, irrespective of other objects, its quantitative characteristic is indiscernible and, in fact, merges with quality. However, as cognition passes from one object to many and as their identity (similarity) and differences are established by comparison, the quantitative aspect begins to emerge. Each property of an object bifurcates, as it were, i.e. alongside what it really is, it reveals its magnitude, the extent to which it manifests itself and spreads–in short, it reveals its *quantity*.

The qualitative and quantitative characteristics thus revealed do not at first show their interdependence. They seem to be neutral with respect to each other. As the knowledge of various phenomena becomes deeper, however, people learn that separate qualitative aspects are interconnected, just like separate quantitative characteristics. Simultaneously, they reveal an intrinsic connection between quality and quantity. They notice that a strictly definite quality corresponds to a definite quantity, and vice versa.

The knowledge of interconnection between the categories of quality and quantity enables people

to comprehend that changes in one phenomenon cause certain changes in another. That which engenders something else and underlies its emergence is a cause; that which is engendered and emerges is an effect. People's cognition of the interconnection between separate qualitative and quantitative aspects thus brings them to the revelation of causality and also to the need for forming the categories of *cause* and *effect.*

People find that cause and effect are so connected that the appearance of a cause inevitably leads to the appearance of an effect, while the absence of a cause results in the absence of an effect. To put it differently, people discover that the connection between a cause and its effect is of a necessary nature. *Necessity* is taken first as a property of the cause-and-effect connection. As knowledge develops, however, the content of the concept of necessity becomes more specific and extensive. People begin to consider as necessary not only causal connections, but also any connections inevitably occurring under certain conditions, and not only connections, but also aspects and properties that are necessarily inherent in the material entity being studied.

Necessary connections discovered in the course of the development of knowledge are often formed in science as laws, i.e. they are comprehended through the category of *law,* which expresses and reflects general, stable and necessary connections and relations.

The transition to the categories of content and form proceeds in parallel with the development

of knowledge from causality to necessity and law. This is because cognition does not confine itself to exposing one separate cause-and-effect connection. Practice which calls for ever deeper and more complete knowledge of the objects of the outside world, causes cognition to proceed from one cause-and-effect connection to another and from explanation of one property of the material entity to another. This necessitates a new category, namely that of *content*, which constitutes the totality of all interactions and consequent changes in the given material entity. But by cognising interactions and consequent changes in a material entity, we realise and gradually reproduce in our minds first the external, and then the internal ways of combining the elements of content, a relatively stable structure within which all the interactions and changes inherent in the material entity take place, i.e. *form*.

The separation of the necessary and the accidental during the development of knowledge and the discovery of separate laws that manifest themselves in the whole under study, do not constitute adequate knowledge, for they relate to separate aspects and connections. However many aspects and connections of the object under study have been cognised and explained, their sum total cannot supply us with a truly complete knowledge of it, because it is merely a mechanical sum of separate aspects. A material entity, however, is not simply a sum total of its inherent properties, but rather their integral whole, their dialectical unity. This makes it necessary to unite connections in

one integral whole and to deduce them from one principle.

The reproduction of all the necessary aspects and laws of the whole under study in their natural interconnection and interdependence constitutes the knowledge of *essence.*

The comprehension of essence begins from finding the *basis*–the basic (most essential) aspects and relations. These underlie the formation, functioning and direction of the changes and development of all other aspects of a particular material entity. For this reason, taking them as a point of departure, we can gradually reproduce in our minds the interconnection existing between its other aspects, too, and find out the place, role and importance of each.

True, in order to achieve this the basic aspects (relations) and the material entity itself must be studied as they emerge and develop. This, in its turn, makes it necessary to find the source of development, the motive force driving the material entity forward and underlying its transition from one stage of development to another. This source of development is contradiction, *the unity and "struggle" of opposite aspects and trends.*

Having revealed the contradictions inherent in the basis and traced their development and the consequent change in the other aspects of the whole under study, we inevitably note that development is effected through the *negation* of certain qualitative states by others, the retention of all the positive in the negated states, and the

repetition of past experience on a new, higher basis.

Thus, the essence of phenomena is cognised through discovering their basis, revealing its contradictory aspects, tracing their struggle and the consequent development of the given phenomenon through the negation of one qualitative characteristic by another.

The above pattern in the development of knowledge from one category to another can be traced in the development of science. Inasmuch as categories are necessary stages in the development of social cognition, the transition from one category to another is inevitably observed in any field of knowledge.

3. The Interconnection of Phenomena

a) Connection and Relation as Concepts

Connection is a relation between phenomena or the aspects of one and the same phenomenon. Not any relation, however, is a connection. Only a *relation that presupposes the dependence of the changes in one phenomenon or aspect on changes in other phenomena or aspects is called a connection.* People's social awareness, for instance, is directly connected with the material conditions of their life, a change in which inevitably causes a corresponding change in their consciousness. Living organisms and the environment they live in are also to a certain extent connected. A change in the environment has a definite effect on living

organisms. Conversely, changes in the animal and vegetable world cause corresponding changes in the environment.

Besides connections, relation includes *isolation* (separateness) which is a relation between phenomena or the aspects of one and the same phenomenon, when changes in some of them do not involve changes in others. A book-cover and the book's content, for instance, are in a state of isolation. A change of the book-cover does not involve a change of its content, and vice versa.

Although connection and isolation are different types of relations, they exist together, in union, rather than separately. The existence of connection involves the existence of isolation, and vice versa. Any material entity (phenomenon or property), although relatively independent, qualitatively isolated, and existing separately from other material entities (phenomena or properties), is also connected with them. It depends on them with respect to some relations and is independent with respect to others. It undergoes changes that both cause and do not cause corresponding changes in other material entities (phenomena or aspects).

Social production, for instance, is connected with geography. The former's level and development trends depend on the fertility of the land, natural resources (including water), climatic conditions, and so on. When these change corresponding changes occur in production. At the same time, production is independent of the geographical environment and develops in accordance with its own laws, rather than geographical ones. Its

characteristic features and forms depend on the level of development of the productive forces, rather than on environmental changes.

Or take another example. An animal or vegetable organism is connected with the environment, being at the same time isolated, separated from it. Some changes in the environment, particularly those involving aspects connected with the organism's vital activity, result in corresponding changes, while others do not.

To sum up, connection and isolation (separateness) exist in unity. True, they do not always manifest themselves equally. In some cases (relations), connection plays a leading part, while in others–isolation. This factor has become the basis for distinguishing in practice and knowledge whether phenomena are interconnected or not. In reality, however, all phenomena are both interconnected and isolated, i.e. they are in a state of separateness or isolation.

b) A Critique of Idealist and Metaphysical Views of Connection

Certain notions of the separate, isolated existence of phenomena and their interconnection appeared together with the emergence of philosophy. Thus, the first Greek philosophers took interconnection as the basic principle for explaining various phenomena. By taking a substance or natural phenomenon (air, water, fire) as the original source, Greek philosophers showed that all phenomena had appeared as a result of certain changes

in that substance (phenomenon) and that, being but different states of one and the same nature, they were intrinsically interconnected, passing from one into another and into the original source.

Heraclitus was especially explicit in advancing the idea that the phenomena of reality were universally interconnected. He thought fire to be the original source of everything and the basis of all connection and separateness.

The first Greek philosophers regarded interconnection as the interpassage of phenomena into each other. Later, however, this view was succeeded by another one, according to which interconnection was a mechanical joining and unjoining of the same immutable elements. This view was held by Empedocles and Anaxagoras, among others. Aristotle overcame the limitations of this view. He understood interconnection as the interdependence of things. Aristotle wrote: "All relatives have correlatives. . . ."[1] He was the first to declare the concept "relation" as a category, thus lending it the necessary generality.

Kant developed the category "relations" and showed that it included both connection and separateness. Studying this problem as applied to the correlation of concepts in a judgement, he noted that they were both interconnected and isolated, that any judgement recorded both the presence of connection and its absence. The judgement "a wolf is an animal", Kant said, expresses the fact that

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[1] Aristotle, *Categories (Logic)*, Vol. 1, Chicago, 1952, p. 11.

the wolf is connected with animals and also that it is separated from all the other animals, except its kin, i.e. the wolves. Kant advanced and developed a correct point of view, yet he made one retrogressive step. He rejected the interconnection of phenomena in objective reality, believing that this interconnection was introduced into the realm of phenomena by the thinking subject. Hegel objected to this. In his opinion, interconnection, relations are inherent in things. It is through relations that they reveal their essence. Hegel wrote: "All that exists is in relation and this relation is what is true in any existence."[1] Advancing this idea, however, Hegel was far from materialist in his views. He thought that relations were ideal by nature and were moments or stages in the development of the Absolute Idea that had existed outside of and prior to the material world and sensuous objects.

Alongside the dialectical conception of relations, the history of philosophy records a metaphysical view whose adherents absolutised isolation and separateness and virtually denied the interconnection of phenomena.

Bacon and Locke developed this view in various ways and it is still shared by some modern bourgeois philosophers who adhere to the pluralist theory that each object is something self-contained, and therefore there can be no connection between objects.

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[1] *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's Werke*, Berlin, 1840, Sechster Band, S. 267.

c) The Universality of the Interconnection Between Phenomena

As distinct from metaphysicists, who deny the interconnection of phenomena in the surrounding world, and idealists, who deduce this interconnection from man's consciousness, dialectical materialists believe that interconnection is a universal form of being inherent in all phenomena of reality. All the existing in the world are links of one matter, "an interconnected totality of bodies".[1]

The Earth, for instance, is connected in a certain way with the Sun and other planets of the solar system. The Sun is a link in the Galaxy, which includes a multitude of other stars that are interconnected. The Galaxy, in its turn, is part of a still greater system and is connected within it with quite a number of other star systems, and thus *ad infinitum.* The situation is similar when we penetrate into the depths of matter. Any celestial body is a totality of different substances, interconnected in one way or another; any substance is a totality of interconnected molecules; any molecule is a totality of interconnected atoms; any atom is a totality of interconnected "elementary" particles. Celestial bodies are connected through gravitational fields. The substances that make up a particular body, as well as the atoms that form a molecule, and electron shells and atomic nuclei are connected through gravitational and electromagnetic fields.

Animate and inanimate nature, the animal and

[1] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature,* p. 70.

vegetable world, nature and society, various aspects of society's life, and the phenomena of consciousness and knowledge are also connected in a certain way.

To put it shortly, everything is interconnected in reality, "each thing (phenomenon, process, etc.) is connected with *every other*".[1]

4. The Individual, the Particular and the Universal

a) The Concept of the Individual and the General

Each phenomenon is connected in one way or another with an infinite number of other phenomena, which interact with it and thus introduce corresponding changes into it. These changes are different in each phenomenon, inasmuch as every phenomenon has its own, special environment which differs in some way from others and inasmuch as it has its own, special sequence of preceding phenomena (its own history), which differs in some way from other sequences. The uniqueness of the changes occurring in any separate phenomenon at any given moment derives from the uniqueness of its characteristic features. *Everything that is unique in a phenomenon, that is inherent only in this phenomenon and is absent in others, constitutes the individual.*

The papillary patterns of the surface of the fingertips, for instance, are individual because they

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 222.

are unique to each person. It is not fortuitous that law-enforcement agencies use fingerprints to identify criminals. The unique features of culture, psychology, language, traditions and customs are specific for each nation.

Each separate phenomenon, while possessing unique features (properties, aspects), is part of integral matter, a link in the endless chain of its development. Each phenomenon must therefore possess, besides its unique features, something that is repeated and inherent in other phenomena, too. *That which is repeated in phenomena, which is inherent not in one, but in many phenomena, is called the general.*

The fact that production relations condition the essence of every individual, the fact that he is a reasonable creature, that his consciousness reflects his social being, etc. constitute the general for this individual, for all this is inherent not only in him, but also in other people. A common territory and a common language make up, among other things, the general for a nation, for these features are characteristic of all nations.

b) A Critique of Metaphysical and Idealist Views of the Individual and the General

Two trends–realist and nominalist–are clearly distinguishable in the history of philosophy with respect to the question of the interconnection between the individual and the general.

Realists maintained that the general existed independently of the individual, while the indi-

vidual depended on the general, was engendered by it and was secondary, temporary and transient. Alfred Whitehead, a modern bourgeois philosopher, provides a similar solution to the problem of the interconnection between the individual and the general. He declares general ideal essences to be eternal objects existing somewhere beyond space and time. Individual objects, he says, appear due to the transition of the corresponding ideal essences into the world of space and time and disappear as soon as these essences abandon the sensuous world and return to the other, ideal world.

Nominalists did not believe that the general existed in objective reality. Only the individual, they asserted, exists in reality, whereas the general exists exclusively in people's minds, in their consciousness. The general is no more than a name for a number of individual objects.

The nominalist viewpoint is developed by some modern bourgeois philosophers, such as Stuart Chase and Cassius Keyser. Chase, for instance, declares the concept of the general to be a symbol that has nothing to do with reality. "We are continually confusing," he writes, "the label with the nonverbal object, and so giving a spurious validity to the word, as something alive. . . ."[1] This, he reasons, makes people believe that abstract general concepts, such as freedom, justice, democracy, capitalism, really exist, while there is not, nor can be, anything of the kind in the surrounding world,

[1] Stuart Chase, *The Tyranny of Words*, N.Y., 1938, p. 9.

for only individual objects and phenomena exist in reality.[1]

The history of philosophy has recorded attempts to overcome the onesidedness of the realist and nominalist solutions to the problem of the interconnection between the individual and the general. Such attempts were made by Duns Scotus in the Middle Ages and by Bacon, Locke, and Feuerbach in the New Age. But these philosophers, too, could not supply a consistently scientific solution. They believed that only the individual really existed, whereas the general existed only as an aspect or moment of the individual.

c) Interconnection Between the Individual and the General

Dialectical materialism succeeded in overcoming the weak points inherent in the realist and nominalist theories on this problem. According to dialectical materialism, neither the general nor the individual exists independently, "as such". Only separate objects, phenomena and processes that are a unity of the individual and the general, the recurrent and the unique, exist independently. The general and the individual exist only in separate objects or phenomena as aspects or moments of them. Interconnection between the separate (object, process) and the general manifests itself as the interconnection between the whole and a part, where the separate is the whole and the

[1] Stuart Chase, *The Tyranny of Words*, N. Y., 1938, p. 9.

general is the part. Hence, "every general only approximately embraces all the individual objects" and "every individual enters incompletely into the general",[1] inasmuch as, besides the general, separate objects possess the individual, and alongside their recurrent properties they possess unique qualities.

Moreover, every separate object is not external –it emerges, exists for a certain time and then turns into another separate object, which turns into a third one, and so on *ad infinitum*. Every chemical element, for instance, can turn into another chemical element under certain conditions; every "elementary" particle can turn into another "elementary" particle; a substance–into a field; a field–into a substance, and so on. It follows that "every individual is connected by thousands of transitions with other *kinds* of individuals (things, phenomena, processes)" and that "the individual exists only in the connection that leads to the general".[2] Possessing the ability to turn, under relevant conditions, into another separate thing, it contains in itself (in its nature) the possible properties of all these other separate things (material entities, phenomena, processes) and for this reason can be regarded as identical to them, i.e. the general.

Existing in separate objects (processes, phenomena), the individual and the general are intrinsically interconnected and pass into one another

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 361.
[2] Ibid.

under certain conditions–the individual becomes the general, and vice versa. This can be easily observed from analysis of the appearance and disappearance of certain properties in the material entities of the animate world. When they settle in different places, for instance, individual organisms find themselves under different environmental conditions and acquire certain adapted features which, under the impact of specific conditions, turn unto general features characterising first a variety, and then the species as a whole. If we take individual animals of the same species from different localities with either distinct environmental features or a different degree of manifestation, we may observe all the stages in the development of a particular feature from an individual deviation to a general feature of the species, and vice versa–from the general to the individual.

d) The General and the Particular

To reveal the individual, the object under study should be compared with all the other objects, but in practice this is impossible. For this reason, an object is normally compared only with some definite objects. This makes it necessary to compare the general with the particular, rather than with the individual.

Indeed, by comparing one object with another we establish their similarity and difference. But *that which distinguishes the objects from one another constitutes their particular, while that*

which indicates their similarity constitutes the general.

By comparing the individual with the particular, it is easy to see that the individual always plays the role of the particular. Being a totality of the properties inherent only in the given object, it will always distinguish this object from all other objects with which it is compared.

While the individual always plays the part of the particular, the role of the general as regards the particular is somewhat different. In some cases it plays the role of the particular, while in others it plays its own role. When it indicates the compared object's difference from other objects, it acts as the particular; when, however, it indicates the similarity of the compared objects, it acts as the general. For example, the fact that the transformation of privately owned industry (enterprises belonging to the national bourgeoisie) in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) was effected gradually, by setting up mixed state-capitalist enterprises, is the general, since this also happened in other countries, such as the German Democratic Republic (GDR). This fact, however, becomes the particular if we compare the SRV with the Soviet Union. Moreover, the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat in the SRV has taken the form of a people's democracy is also a general moment, for this form of proletarian dictatorship exists in a number of other socialist countries, such as Bulgaria and Rumania. But this aspect will constitute the particular if we compare the SRV not with Bulgaria and Rumania, but

with the USSR, where the dictatorship of the proletariat has assumed the form of a republic of Soviets.

Not everything general, however, may play two roles–its own and that of the particular. There is a type of the general that excludes the role of the particular: this is the *universal.* Since it is inherent in all the objects and phenomena of the real world, it cannot be used to distinguish one object or phenomenon from another. It will always point out the similarity or identity of the objects compared. Such characteristic features of a thing, for instance, as the presence of necessary and accidental properties, content and form, the individual and the general, cannot play the role of the particular. They do not make it possible to differentiate the compared object from other objects, because all the objects possess these features.

Thus, the individual always plays the role of the particular, whereas the general plays it depending on circumstances. When the general indicates a difference between compared phenomena, it takes on the role of the particular; when, however, it points out their similarity, it plays its own role, i.e. the role of the general. The universal cannot play the role of the particular–it always indicates the similarity or identity of the phenomena compared.

A correct use of laws governing the interconnections between the general and the particular is very important for implementing social transformations, especially building socialism. "In their struggle," Leonid Brezhnev said at the 25th CPSU

Congress, "Communists proceed from the general laws governing the development of the revolution and the building of socialism and communism.... A deep understanding of these general laws, and reliance on them, in combination with a creative approach and with consideration for the concrete conditions in each separate country, have been and remain the inalienable and distinctive feature of a Marxist-Leninist."[1]

5. Cause and Effect

a) The Concept of Cause and Effect

In contrast to mechanistic materialists, who looked for the cause of changes in a phenomenon outside of it, in another phenomenon, dialectical materialists believe that the cause of any change and development in a phenomenon lies primarily within the phenomenon itself, being the interaction of its aspects or elements. Engels wrote that "reciprocal action is the true *causa finalis* of things".[2]

For example, the cause of the emergence, existence and development of a state is the interaction (struggle) of antagonistic classes, whereas the cause of a social revolution is the interaction of advanced productive forces and backward rela-

[1] L. I. Brezhnev, *Report of the CPSU Central Committee and the Immediate Tasks of the Party in Home and Foreign Policy. XXVth Congress of the CPSU*, p. 37.

[2] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 231.

tions of production. The cause of metal corrosion is the chemical interaction of metals with gases in the atmosphere and water and with substances dissolved in it.

Thus, *cause is the interaction of phenomena or the aspects of one and the same phenomenon underlying corresponding changes. Effect is the changes occurring in phenomena or the aspects of a phenomenon as a result of their interaction.*

b) A Critique of Idealist and Metaphysical Views of Causality

The notion of cause appeared during the initial stages of the development of philosophy. The views of the ancient philosophers were, however, vague and uncertain. They did not distinguish between cause and the first principle, matter constituting the basis of existing things and phenomena. Thus, for instance, ancient Greek philosophers first believed water (Thales), then air (Anaximenes) and fire (Heraclitus) to be cause. Later, however, cause was thought to be eternal, immutable atoms with a different form, position and order which produced different bodies upon collision. Still later, all factors underlying the emergence of separate things were considered to be cause. Plato listed them as formless matter, a definite idea, a mathematical relation, and the idea of "supreme good" which he believed to be a motive force. Aristotle saw four reasons (causes) behind the emergence of things: material, productive, formal, and purposive.

Aristotle's understanding of causality was not developed upon for a long time. Medieval philosophy did not add anything to Aristotle's definition of these categories. Using his ideas of formal and purposive causes, medieval philosophy was preoccupied in substantiating the existence of God and his creation of the sensuous world.

Bacon made one step forward in studying causality. Although he recognised Aristotle's four causes, he thought one cause to be decisive–the formal cause which, he believed, was inside a thing, rather than outside it, as Aristotle had maintained. This cause was the law governing the existence of things.

In contrast to Bacon, Hobbes rejected formal and purposive causes and recognised only two causes in reality–productive (acting) and material. The productive cause, he held, was the totality of the properties of an active body causing corresponding changes in a passive body, while the material cause was the totality of the properties of a passive body. Defining cause, Bacon emphasised that it belonged to the realm of the internal, to the nature of a thing, whereas Hobbes placed cause within the context of the external and connected it with accidents–fickle and inessential properties. He reduced it, in fact, to the action of one body upon another.

Spinoza understood the limitations of this view of causality and attempted to go further. He considered it necessary to look for the causes of the existence and development of things within the things themselves, which prompted him to ad-

vance the concept *causa sui* (the cause of itself). True, Spinoza believed that only the world as a whole, infinite and absolute nature could contain the cause of its existence in itself. As to finite things, the causes of their existence lay not inside but outside them in other finite things.

The idea that nature contained the cause of its existence in itself and had no need of any external force lying beyond it, was rather progressive and played a substantial role in fighting against idealism and religion. It was, however, inadequate for overcoming the metaphysical concept of causality, which reduced the cause-and-effect connection to the action of one body on another. So it was not by chance that Spinoza's *causa sui* did not change the concept of cause that existed at the time. Natural scientists and philosophers alike continued to believe cause to be the action of some external force on a particular thing. Newton, the 18th-century French materialist, and some other thinkers adhered to this definition of cause.

Reducing the cause of the existence and development of a thing to the action of another thing engenders a number of difficulties in knowledge. Indeed, to cognise a thing means to cognise its cause. If, however, the cause of the given thing is concealed in another thing, in order to cognise the former we have to cognise the latter. But cognising this second thing presupposes revealing its cause, which is hidden in a third thing. It follows that we have first to cognise the third thing. But the same will happen again in this case, too,

Thus, cognising any given thing on the basis of the above definition of cause will inevitably lead us to infinity and we shall have to cognise an infinite multitude of other things, which is, of course, impossible. Spinoza understood this, and concluded that single things could not be adequately cognised.

True, the 18th-century philosophers and natural scientists who advanced this metaphysical principle of causality did not notice its inherent contradiction. Guided by this method, they had no doubt that it was possible to cognise the thing under study. Moreover, they thought it to be adequate for obtaining an exhaustive knowledge of the Universe, for explaining any phenomenon that had taken place in the past, and for forecasting any event in the future. The level of development physics had reached at that time allowed scientists to calculate the body's coordinates and velocity at any moment of time in the future on the basis of the known force acting upon it, its coordinates and the velocity of its motion at a given moment in time. Though this understanding of the cause-and-effect connection is more or less acceptable for explaining a simple mechanical movement, where changes in the state of an isolated system are not connected with changes in its quality, it is absolutely unacceptable for explaining other, more complex forms of motion, the emergence of which is connected with certain qualitative factors caused not so much by the action of external forces, as by the inner interactions in an object.

Hegel was the first to see the limitations and contradictory nature of the metaphysical view of causality. Showing that the metaphysical approach to the cause-and-effect connection of phenomena inevitably leads to bad infinity (i.e. a mechanical repetition of one and the same properties without any progress in their development), Hegel rejected the above concept of causality and offered a new solution. In his opinion, cause and effect were in dialectical interaction. A cause, being an active substance, acts upon a passive substance, thus giving rise to changes in it, which makes it the effect. The latter, however, exerts a known counteraction and thus turns from the passive substance into an active one which begins to act as a cause in relation to the first substance.

Thus, owing to their interaction, cause and effect turn into each other, exchange places and act in relation to each other as cause and effect simultaneously. By taking the interaction of cause and effect as his point of departure, Hegel was one of the first to discover their dialectical interconnection.

Some bourgeois philosophers and scientists still hold a mechanistic view of causality, which explains their mistakes. There are modern physicists who attempt to explain certain phenomena in the behaviour of "elementary" particles on the basis of this view. As a result, they arrive at the conclusion that the principle of causality cannot be applied to phenomena occurring in the microworld. This view is shared, for instance, by

the US physicist Percy W. Bridgman. The law of cause and effect, he says, does not operate in the realm of elementary particles. Such assertions are based on the fact that, in quantum mechanics, it is impossible to simultaneously determine both the position and the velocity of a microparticle and to predict its behaviour. But the possibility of an unambiguous prediction of an object's behaviour and the principle of causality are not one and the same thing. The content of the principle of causality is recognition of the fact that cause underlies every phenomenon. Prediction of the behaviour of an object, on the other hand, is the result of knowledge of the cause-and-effect connection, of a sufficiently exact fixation of the initial state of the object and the nature of its interaction with the environment. Quantum mechanics, however, does not produce either the first or the second result at the present stage of its development. For this reason it expresses causality in the microworld in the form of probability.

This does not imply, however, that there is no causality in the microworld at all. It is there, although it manifests itself in a form different from that of mechanical motion. Causality manifests itself in different ways depending on the field of reality. For living matter, for instance, one form is characteristic, for society's life–another, for cognitive activity–yet another. The mechanistic view of causality does not take account of this multitude of forms and deals with only one–mechanical. It is, therefore, unsuitable for expressing the causality of phenomena in other forms of motion.

c) The Interconnection Between Cause and Effect

As distinct from metaphysical materialism, which rejects the interpassage of cause and effect, dialectical materialism holds that they can change places. That which at one time and in one relation is a cause, is an effect at another time and in another relation, and vice versa. The struggle between antagonistic classes, for example, is the cause of the emergence of a state. Once established, however, the state itself begins to exert an influence on the class struggle. It defends some classes and suppresses others, thereby causing changes in this struggle. The state now acts as a cause in relation to these changes, while the latter act as an effect in relation to the state.

Different causes may underlie one and the same effect. For example, a higher productivity of labour may be caused by improved means of labour, higher skills of workers, a better organisation of labour, and so on.

As a rule, joint action by a plurality of causes, instead of one, is behind every effect. This is because no interaction is isolated from other interactions–it is intrinsically connected with them, affects and is affected by them. As a result, the emergence of a phenomenon is affected not by one but by a plurality of interactions. It is the effect of a multitude of different causes.

Although every phenomenon is engendered by several causes, their roles differ. Some causes are necessary, and the phenomenon cannot come about without them, while others, though they are

involved in the phenomenon's appearance, are not so important–the effect would come about even in their absence.

Those causes without which the effect cannot materialise are called *basic,* whereas those whose absence does not exclude the appearance of the effect are called *non-basic.*

For example, the basic cause of the economic crises inherent in capitalist society is the contradiction between the social nature of production and the private form of appropriation. An economic crisis cannot develop without this cause. On the other hand, non-basic causes may include phenomena, such as currency devaluation, the bankruptcy of a certain enterprise or a bank, or a lower demand for a certain category of goods. An economic crisis may develop without any of these phenomena.

Besides basic and non-basic causes, there are internal and external ones. The interaction of the aspects of one and the same object causing certain changes is called an *internal* cause. The interaction of different objects underlying corresponding changes in them is called an *external* cause. The interaction of people in producing material goods, for instance, is the internal cause of the development of production, whereas the impact of the geographical environment on production is its external cause.

Internal causes are decisive for the emergence and development of a material entity. External causes affect its development only through internal causes.

6. Necessity and Accident (Chance)

a) The Concept of Necessity and Accident (Chance)

The concept of necessity is developed on the basis of a further study of causality, particularly on the basis of understanding the necessary character of the cause-and-effect connection. It is not for nothing that some philosophers and natural scientists equate necessity with causality, though they are different concepts. Indeed, the concept of causality reflects the dependence of some forms of being upon others, their genetic connection. The concept of necessity, on the other hand, reflects the inevitability with which certain connections and properties appear under suitable conditions.

Properties and connections are called *necessary* if they have the cause of their existence in themselves and are conditioned by the inner nature of the elements making up a phenomenon. Properties and connections for which the cause is to be found in other objects or phenomena, i.e. that are conditioned by external circumstances, are called *accidental.* Necessary aspects and connections inevitably materialise under corresponding conditions, whereas accidental properties and connections are not inevitable–they may or may not occur.

The confrontation between the capitalist and the worker on the labour market, for instance, is a necessary phenomenon. It has been conditioned by the class essence of both, by their social standing. The worker cannot survive without selling

his labour to the capitalist, who cannot remain what he is without hiring workers, without exploiting them.

The hiring of workers by capitalists is necessary, while the turning of a worker, for instance, into a capitalist is accidental, as this does not follow from the essence of the worker, but is due to some external circumstances.

Indeed, it does not follow from the workers' social essence that they should turn into capitalists. On the contrary, according to this essence workers should always remain workers. If one of them becomes a capitalist, this is due to an accidental concurrence of circumstances.

b) A Critique of Idealist and Metaphysical Views of Necessity and Accident (Chance)

Subjective idealists do not recognise the objective existence of necessity. It is, they say, a characteristic feature of consciousness, of thinking.

Kant, for instance, sought to prove the absence of necessity in nature. In his view, necessity is a form of thinking introduced by man into nature and the world of phenomena. Mach thought necessity to be a logical connection. According to Karl Pearson, an English philosopher and mathematician, necessity exists only in the realm of concepts. The modern German bourgeois philosopher Günther Jacoby deduces necessity from the logical connection of concepts. His reasoning is as follows: systems and their constituent

elements existing in the outside world are in a state of repulsion. They are devoid of any binding identity and necessary interconnection. The latter exists in the identity of a system of concepts, through which we are trying to reflect a particular system of the world. Essentially, Jacoby's way of reasoning as regards necessity is a repetition of the Kantian viewpoint.

Some philosophers declare necessity to be a conventional postulate accepted by people as a reference point to facilitate explanation of the world. There is nothing in nature, they maintain, to correspond to this postulate; nature does not have to behave to suit us.

If there were nothing in reality corresponding to the reference points man uses in the process of cognition, he would not be able to explain, let alone change, a single phenomenon. His practical activities, however, show that man's notions of the necessity of certain connections in things correctly reflect reality and are, for this reason, reference points for cognising and transforming reality.

As distinct from idealists, materialists recognise the objective existence of necessity and regard it as one of the universal properties of material entities and their connections. As regards logical necessity, it is, materialists say, a picture, a copy, a reflection of the relevant aspects and connections of the outside world.

While all materialists recognise the objective existence of necessity, not all of them recognise the objectivity of accident. Some of them believe

it to have been invented by people to conceal their ignorance of certain matters. When a man, they say, does not know the cause of a certain phenomenon and cannot explain it, he declares it accidental. This was the view held by Democritus, Spinoza and Holbach, among others. Some thinkers persist to this day in upholding a similar view. As we cannot foresee some phenomena, they argue, we are inclined to consider them accidental. For a person who knew everything, accident would not exist as something unforeseen. Within the confines of human knowledge, these philosophers assert, the category of accident is a brief, minimised expression of the fundamental insufficiency of the explanation of phenomena.

As a rule, rejecting the objectivity of accident is connected with the universality of the cause-and-effect connection and its necessary character. If every phenomenon, the exponents of this viewpoint say, has its cause necessarily bringing it to life, all the phenomena that exist in the world are necessary. There are no accidents and can be none.

The idea of the universality of causality and the necessary nature of the cause-and-effect connection is correct. This, however, does not mean that all phenomena existing in the world are necessary, and that there is no chance. It is true that every phenomenon is connected with the cause that engenders it, but it is not this connection that makes it necessary. The ruin of a harvest by hail is a necessary result of the impact of ice on plants, but this phenomenon is not considered

necessary. Neither is the death of a man overrun by a car, although it is the inevitable result of the blow of a certain force the man received upon collision with the car. The necessity of a phenomenon stems from the necessity of the cause itself, not from the necessary character of the cause-and-effect connection, nor from the fact that it necessarily follows from its cause.

Causes may be necessary or accidental. As noted above, the interaction of phenomena or of the elements making up one and the same phenomenon is the cause of these phenomena. But these phenomena or elements may encounter each other and begin to interact owing to their inner nature, as happens, for instance, when the proletariat and the bourgeoisie meet on the labour market, or they may hit upon each other and begin to interact by accident, due to some circumstance. The hail or the traffic accident referred to above are such examples. It does not follow from the inner nature of plants that they should be exposed to ice during their blossoming or ripening periods, nor does it follow from the inner nature of man that he should necessarily be hit by a car. Both phenomena have been caused by the concurrence of external circumstances.

Thus, the necessary character of the cause-and-effect connection does not exclude the objective existence of chance. The latter is a universal form of being, just as necessity is.

c) The Interconnection Between Necessity and Accident (Chance)

Necessity and accident are a universal form of being; they do not exist separately, but form an intrinsic unity and are the moments or aspects of one and the same thing. The one-to-one ratio, for instance, of sodium and chlorine atoms in a molecule of sodium chloride is necessary, inasmuch as it is determined by the inner nature of this substance. But the fact that a given atom of sodium interacted with a particular atom of chlorine and formed this very molecule is accidental, the result of certain external circumstances. Or take another example: the growth of a plant from a grain in a spot of fertile soil is necessary, but the fact that the grain was planted in this very spot is accidental. Other circumstances, such as which plants grow nearby and which pests threaten it, are also accidental.

Being intrinsically connected with necessity, accident (chance) is a form through which necessity manifests itself and is supplemented. Necessity finds its way through a maze of accidental deviations which, although expressing it as a tendency, introduce into a concrete process or phenomenon many new aspects which do not follow from necessity, but are conditioned by external circumstances. Take, for instance, a necessary connection, such as the dependence of a commodity's price on its value–the amount of socially necessary labour expended on its production. This connection manifests itself in exchange operations only in the form of a tendency, through constant

deviations in one direction or another. These deviations, however, being an expression of the dependence of a commodity's price on its value, supplement the above necessary connection. In particular, they also express the dependence of the commodity's price on the supply-and-demand ratio established on the market, i.e. on the concrete conditions of the sale and purchase of commodities.

As a phenomenon moves and develops, the accidental may turn into the necessary, and vice versa. Take this example: subsistence economy was dominant in primitive communal society. Each community produced its own means of subsistence and distributed them equally among its members. All this was the necessary effect of a low level of development of the productive forces, which excluded any chance for producing a surplus of material goods over and above the producers' direct requirements. Under such conditions, an exchange of one product for another was exceptionally rare, an accident conditioned by external circumstances, rather than by the inherent nature of the social system of the time. Later, however, as the productive forces developed, the possibility arose of producing a greater quantity of goods than was required for the direct producer. This led to a growing exchange of one type of product for another. As private ownership of the means of production emerged, this exchange became a necessary aspect of a new economic system arising from the ruins of primitive society. As for subsistence economy, at a cer-

tain stage in history it became totally extinct and accidental. Thus, in the development process the accidental becomes the necessary, and vice versa.

7. Law

a) The Concept of Law

Necessity exists in the form of the properties and connections of phenomena. Definite necessary connections or relations are called laws. Thus, a *law* is that which cannot fail to take place under given conditions. The law of value, for instance, which expresses the dependence of a commodity's price on the amount of socially necessary labour expended on its production, operates inevitably wherever there is commodity production. Or take another example: the known chemical law of constant proportions, that every substance has a strictly definite and constant qualitative and quantitative composition, invariably manifests itself in every substance, since the relations it expresses stem from the very nature of the atoms that make up the molecules of the given substance.

In saying that a law is a *necessary* connection, we are not yet revealing all its specific features. The fact is that not all necessary connections are laws. Single (individual) connections, for instance, cannot be laws. Only a *general necessary* connection, i.e. the one inherent in many phenomena, is a law.

The law of half-decay, for example, according to which over a certain period of time (specific

for each substance) only half the substance decays, whatever the amount, applies not for one specific radioactive process, but for all similar processes and all radioactive substances, i.e. it is a general connection. This is true of any law of nature, society or human thinking.

Being a general, repeated connection, law is also a *stable* connection. It exists as long as the corresponding form of the motion of matter (or of a definite stage in its development) or thought exists; it exists as long as the phenomena representing the given form of motion or thought exist. For example, the law of dependence of people's consciousness on their social being originated together with the emergence of human society, and will exist as long as society exists. Or take another example: the law of value arose during the decay of primitive communal society, it was operative in slave and feudal societies, and is operative under capitalism and socialism. It will cease to exist only after communism has been built and the need for commodity production has completely disappeared.

To sum up, *a law is a necessary, general, and stable connection of phenomena or of their aspects.*

b) Dynamic and Statistical Laws

Being general connections (relations), laws manifest themselves in many phenomena. This manifestation, however, takes different forms. Some laws apply to every phenomenon or mate-

rial entity representing a certain form of motion or field of reality, while others manifest themselves only in a mass of phenomena. The first type are usually called *dynamic* laws, the second–*statistical* laws.

Ohm's Law, expressing the dependence of a conductor's resistance on its composition, cross-section area and length, is an example of a dynamic law. This law embraces a great many different conductors, and is true for each separate conductor among them. Another example is Michael Faraday's discovery of the connection between the deposition of a substance on electrodes and the electric current passing through the electrolyte. This connection expresses a proportional dependence of the mass of the substance deposited on the electrode on the amount of electricity passing through the electrolyte, which is characteristic of all cases when electricity passes through solutions, and manifests itself in every case.

The interconnection discovered by Boyle and Mariotte between changes in the pressure of a gas and in its volume at a constant temperature is statistical. This occurs only in a mass of chaotically moving molecules making up a certain volume of gas. A separate molecule, however, is not subject to the law. Colliding with other molecules, each molecule constantly changes its direction and speed. As a result, the force of the impact of each molecule on the walls of the vessel is accidental and depends on a multitude of circumstances. A certain regularity, however, finds its way through this maze of changes in speeds of motion and,

correspondingly, in the forces of impact produced on the vessel walls by the various molecules making up the given volume. This regularity is that the pressure of a gas is inversely proportional to its volume.

The laws of quantum mechanics pertaining to the motion of microparticles are also statistical, inasmuch as they are unable to determine the motion of every single particle, but only of a group or multitude of particles.

Characteristically, dynamic laws make it possible to foresee fairly accurately the inception of a certain phenomenon and changes in its properties or states. For example, the law of proportional dependence of the mass of a substance deposited on an electrode on the amount of electricity passing through the electrolyte makes it possible to predict accurately the amount of substance deposited in any particular case.

As distinct from dynamic laws, statistical laws do not allow scientists to make accurate predictions of the occurrence or non-occurrence of a particular phenomenon, or the direction and nature of changes in its properties. Statistical laws allow them to determine only the probability of the emergence or change of a certain phenomenon.

c) General and Particular Laws

Although all the laws are general connections (relations), they apply to different groups of phenomena. Some of them embrace a bigger group, some–a smaller.

The laws applying to a larger group of phenomena are *general* laws in relation to those applying to the smaller, which are called *particular* or specific laws.

The law of conformity of the relations of production to the level of development of the productive forces, for instance, is a general law in relation to the law of average profit, inasmuch as it operates in all socio-economic systems. The law of average profit, on the other hand, is a particular law in relation to the former, because it operates only within the framework of bourgeois society.

The concepts of a general and a particular law are relative. One and the same law may be both general and particular, depending on the relation. It will be particular in relation to a law embracing a wider range of phenomena and general as regards a law operating in a narrower field. The law of value, for instance, is particular as regards the law of conformity of the relations of production to the level of development of the productive forces, since it does not operate in all societies (as the latter does), but only in those where there is commodity production. It is, however, general in relation to the law of surplus value, inasmuch as the latter manifests itself in a narrower field of phenomena, operating only in capitalist production and not extending to all commodity production.

Besides those laws that can act either as general or as particular laws depending on concrete relations, there are also laws that are general in

all relations. These are called *universal* laws. They apply to any field of reality. All other laws are particular in relation to them, in so far as they only pertain to some specific fields of reality. Universal laws are studied by philosophy, whereas laws connected with a specific form of the motion of matter are dealt with by the special sciences.

d) The Interconnection Between General and Particular Laws

General laws may operate independently or through particular laws, in which case both relate to one and the same connection. When, however, a general and a particular law relate to different connections, they co-exist and co-operate separately from each other.

For instance, the general chemical law of constant proportions and particular laws indicating which chemical elements in what proportion make up certain compounds concern the same relation—the composition of chemical elements. It is not accidental that in our example the general law manifests itself through particular, specific laws.

The situation is quite different as regards the correlation of the law of conformity of the relations of production to the level of development of the productive forces (a general law) and the basic economic law of socialism, which is aimed at ensuring the fullest satisfaction of the material and cultural requirements of people through developing socialist production on the basis of ad-

vanced technology (a particular law). The first law characterises the connection between the level of development of the productive forces and of production relations, while the second applies to the connection between continuous growth of production and the requirements of people. The content of the first law shows the necessity of changing the relations of production as the productive forces develop, whereas the content of the second law indicates the aim of production and the ways and means of attaining it. These laws concern different connections and relations and cannot operate one through the other; they operate quite independently, alongside each other. Though they exist independently, they are closely linked, not isolated from each other. This interconnection, however, differs radically from the interconnection where one law manifests itself through another.

The independent existence of general laws is an inevitable effect of the development of reality. Indeed, the transition from one phenomenon to another in the development process involves both the retention of all that is positive in the preceding stages, and the emergence of new properties and connections. In the passage from atom to molecule, for instance, many properties and connections inherent in the atom are retained. The atom is contained, in its sublated, i.e. transformed shape, in the molecule. In addition, however, the molecule acquires a number of new properties conditioned by a new type of interaction, namely, that of atoms. The retention of the positive con-

tent of the stages passed and the emergence of new properties and connections can be easily traced in the development of a living organism, as well as human society.

The retention of certain properties and connections characteristic of past stages in a new stage of development of a higher order reveals old laws in new phenomena. The inception of new properties and connections, on the other hand, causes new laws to appear, which are particular in relation to the old laws that have passed into the new phenomena together with the retained connections. They operate only in phenomena representing a new stage of development, whereas the old laws operate both here and in phenomena representing a lower stage of development. Being particular, specific to the new stage of development, these laws cannot be the form through which the old laws manifest themselves, inasmuch as they are connected with different interactions and express different relations. Laws specific to a molecule, for instance, are connected with the interaction of atoms, while the old laws relate to the interaction of the "elementary" particles making up the atoms.

We have discussed here the correlation between the general and specific laws studied by the special sciences. But what is the relationship between the laws of dialectics and those of the special sciences? The former express the universal connections and relations of reality. But these connections and relations do not exist independently–they take on the form of the concrete connections and relations that make up the content

of the corresponding concrete (general and specific) laws which are the object of study for the special sciences. Universal connections and relations constitute certain repeated aspects of the content of all similar concrete connections and relations. As a result, the laws of dialectics cannot operate in a pure form—they exist and manifest themselves only through the other general and specific laws studied by the special sciences.

8. Content and Form

a) The Concept of Content and Form

Content is a category of materialist dialectics denoting a totality of all interactions and resultant changes occurring in a phenomenon. The content of a society, for instance, includes all interactions between the people who make it up, particularly the interactions that appear in the process of producing, distributing and consuming material goods, the interaction between political parties, the state and its citizens.

The content of a phenomenon includes both internal and external interactions, i.e. the interactions between the elements of a phenomenon and the phenomenon's interactions with other phenomena surrounding it. The content of a living organism, for instance, includes, besides the processes that take place inside it, all the organism's actions that are its responses to the actions of the corresponding factors in its environment.

The interactions and changes of a phenomenon are not haphazard–they take place within certain limits that lend them a certain stability and a qualitative definiteness, and have a certain relatively stable system of connections, a certain structure. *The relatively stable system of connections of the content's aspects and its structure make up the form of a phenomenon.* The form of a living organism, for instance, is its morphology, the structure of its body; the form of a mode of production is the relatively stable system of social relations among people established during the production and distribution of material goods.

b) A Critique of Idealist and Metaphysical Views of Content and Form

Being the structure of content, form is intrinsically connected with it and cannot exist without it. There have been attempts in the history of philosophy, however, to prove that form exists outside and independently of content. Aristotle, for example, believed that content and form could exist separately and that they merged into one thing only under strictly definite conditions. Many modern bourgeois philosophers and natural scientists believe that form exists independently of matter. Thus, Erwin Schrödinger, a prominent physicist, declares "elementary" particles to be pure forms devoid of any material content. "...When you come to the ultimate particles constituting matter," he writes, "there seems to be no point in thinking of them again as consisting of

material. They are, as it were, *pure shape,* nothing but shape. . .."[1]

If, however, "elementary" particles were nothing that would constitute matter, if they were nothing but forms constructed by people according to known mathematical and geometrical laws, while virtually everything in objective reality consisted of "elementary" particles, matter would disappear as objective reality and only the pure, ideal form–i.e. consciousness–would remain.

The idealist nature of this reasoning is evident. In reality, however, there is and can be no pure form devoid of matter. Any form is the structure of a particular material entity. As regards the ideal forms created by people in the course of extending of social knowledge, they are not pure forms either, but have a content reflecting the aspects and connections of the outside world.

c) The Interconnection Between Content and Form

Content and form are intrinsically interconnected and constitute a dialectical unity, but they play different parts in this unity. Content is decisive, while form appears under its direct influence.

Emerging under the direct impact of content, form is not passive–it also exerts an influence on content. This influence is twofold: form either facilitates the development of content or hampers it, depending on whether it corresponds to the latter or not. When it does, it is conducive to the

[1] E. Schrödinger, *Science and Humanism. Physics in Our Times,* Cambridge, 1952, p. 21.

content's development, when it does not, it hinders its development.

Why does form correspond to content in some cases, while in others it does not? The fact is that form is, by its very nature, stable, whereas content is fluid, open to change, being the totality of the processes occurring in a phenomenon. Initially, form corresponds to the content that gave rise to it and provides great scope for the content's development. As time passes, the content reaches a level at which the confines of the given system of connections become too narrow. The form begins to hamper the development of the content, which results in their incompatibility. This incompatibility grows ever stronger and, sooner or later, results in the destruction of the old form—a relatively stable system of connections—and the shaping of a new system of connections, a new form that at first corresponds to the content that has given rise to it, but later becomes obsolete, too, and is replaced by a new form, and so on *ad infinitum.*

The destruction of the old form and the emergence of a new form is a process of fundamental qualitative change of the content. Some interactions or processes are destroyed, others emerge and yet others undergo changes.

For example, during the transition from one economic pattern of mode of production to another as a result of the resolution of the contradiction between advanced productive forces (content) and obsolete relations of production (form), not only the form, but also the content undergo changes. Thus, during the transition from

artisan, handicraft production to capitalist manufacture, the transformation of the relations of production occurred together with a drastic change in the productive forces, which resulted in the emergence of a new productive force connected with a new distribution of people in the process of production and with a new organisation of labour. The productive forces also change during the transformation of capitalist into socialist production relations–they are substantially reconstructed. Owing to the fact that under socialism production is aimed at the fullest possible satisfaction of people's requirements, not at securing the maximum profit, the orientation of a great number of enterprises inevitably changes, a new relationship is established between separate industries, and quite new industries are set up.

To sum up, the transformation of the old form, which does not correspond to the developed content, into a new one is also a process by which the content is drastically changed. Lenin said on this score: "...the struggle of content with form and conversely. The throwing off of the form, the transformation of the content."[1]

d) Part and Whole, Element and Structure

When we consider a phenomenon from the point of view of its content it appears as a whole, as a totality of all the elements and aspects that make it up and of all their interactions. It is through this totality that content relates to form. The sum-

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 222.

mary characteristic of content, however, becomes inadequate as the object is further cognised and a need arises for a closer study of the content's separate aspects, elements, processes, and relations. The content is broken up into its component parts, analysis of which necessitates the discovery of regularities in their interaction with each other and with the whole. Regularities governing the interaction of separate parts with the whole are reflected in the categories "whole" and "part", while those governing the interaction of the component parts of the whole are reflected in the categories "element" and "structure".

An object (process, phenomenon, relation) that makes up another object (process, phenomenon, relation) and represents an aspect of its content, constituting the *part.* An object (process, phenomenon, relation) including other integrally interconnected objects (phenomena, processes, relations) as its component parts and possessing such other properties that are not the properties of its component parts, constitutes the *whole.*

Each object is a whole made up of definite parts. A molecule of water, for instance, makes a whole consisting of one atom of oxygen and two atoms of hydrogen. Each atom that is part of a molecule of water constitutes part of a whole. It is not dissolved in the whole, it does not merge with its quality, but rather retains its qualitative distinction and possesses a certain degree of independence enabling it to occupy a strictly definite place in the whole and play a strictly definite role. The molecule thus represents a discrete whole

including parts that have their own specific content. Their content, however, is conditioned not only by their specific nature, but also by the general nature of the whole. For this reason they play their specific roles not by themselves but as parts of the whole. On the other hand, the general nature of the whole (the molecule in our example) depends on the specific nature of the parts that make it up, particularly the atoms.

The interconnection of the whole and part, expressed in the dependence of the quality of the whole on the specific nature of its component parts, on the one hand, and the qualities of the parts on the specific nature of the whole, on the other, results from the interconnection between the parts within the whole, this interconnection constituting the structure of the whole. It is the interconnection of the elements that underlies the inception of the whole and the transformation of the elements into component parts of the whole. There is no whole without structure, which is the main condition for the existence of the whole.

The concept *structure* represents the manner of the combination and interconnection of the whole's elements. The concept *elements* signifies the components of a whole, which are interconnected and interdependent in one way or another.

"Element" and "part" are not identical concepts. Elements reveal their specific content through their correlation with structure, with the system of connections established between them. Being independent and qualitatively isolated, elements differ essentially from the connection estab-

lished between them. The specific content of parts, on the other hand, is revealed through their correlation with the whole, rather than through the correlation with the connections established between them. For this reason they cannot be opposed to the connections making up the structure of the whole, inasmuch as these connections are themselves parts of the whole. Hence the concept of part is broader than that of element. Parts of the whole are not only interconnected elements, but also the interconnections between the elements, i.e. the structure.

By noting that structure is the manner of the connection of elements in an integral system, we in fact equate the concepts of structure and form. This is, however, inevitable and natural because the former emerged on the basis of the latter and constitutes its concrete expression. Moreover, the concept of structure expresses, when it comes together with that of content, not only the regularities governing the interconnection of content and form, but also those governing the interconnection of the content's elements, when it comes together with the concept of element. The latter interconnection is characterised in particular by the fact that each element, while being qualitatively isolated and relatively independent within the whole, depends greatly on the other elements making up the given whole and upon the nature of its connection with them. These connections largely determine its place, role and significance in the whole, together with its qualitative and quantitative characteristics. On the other hand,

the connection between the elements itself depends on their nature and on their qualitative and quantitative characteristics.

For example, relations established between a husband and wife, and between parents and children in a family, depend greatly on the qualitative characteristics of the people involved. On the other hand, the qualitative features of these people depend to a large extent on the relations existing in the family.

To sum up, the properties of the elements depend on the structure of the whole they make up, whereas the structure of this whole depends on its constituent elements, their nature and quantity. In other words, the elements of an object and the structure of this object (the manner of connection of the elements) are necessarily interdependent and constitute a dialectical unity.

9. Essence and Phenomenon

a) The Concept of Essence and Phenomenon

As noted above, content includes the totality of interactions and changes inherent in a thing, whereas form embraces the totality of stable connections and relations making up its structure. Some of the interactions and changes making up content are necessary, while others are accidental. The same is true of form. Some of the connections and relations making it up are necessary, others are accidental. That which is necessary in a thing's content and form constitutes its essence, whereas that which is accidental is a phenomenon.

We should not, however, think that essence is composed of a mechanical totality of necessary aspects and connections. Essence is the totality of a thing's necessary aspects and connections, in which they are naturally interdependent and dialectically united.

Thus, *essence is the totality of all the necessary aspects and connections of a thing, taken in their natural interdependence; phenomenon is the manifestation of these aspects and connections on the surface through the entire mass of accidental deviations.*

The essence of a society, for example, is the totality of all its necessary aspects and connections, including all the laws governing its functioning and development. The realm of phenomena includes manifestations of all these aspects and connections (laws) through interactions among people in their everyday life, through the activities of public institutions and organisations, and so on. The atoms making up a molecule and the laws governing their interaction constitute the molecule's essence. The totality of properties through which the laws governing the interaction and interdependence of these atoms appear on the surface, constitutes a phenomenon.

b) A Critique of Idealist and Metaphysical Views of Essence and Phenomenon

Idealists either reject the existence of essence or deny its materiality. Berkeley, for instance, did not recognise the existence of essence. This is

also true of Mach and Avenarius. Some modern bourgeois philosophers, too, like Russel and Schiller, deny the existence of essence.

Russel, for instance, reasons as follows about whether or not man has an essence. What is Mr. Smith?–he asks, and answers: When we look at him we see a number of colours, when we listen to him we hear a series of sounds and think that he, just like us, has thoughts and feelings. But what is Mr. Smith besides these phenomena? He is simply an imaginary hook on which supposedly phenomena are hung. Actually, however, the phenomena do not need this hook.

A similar view is held by Schiller. He tries to prove that phenomena have no essence by arguing that people understand the essence of an object differently. Religion, he reasons, takes man's soul as his essence, a physician thinks that it is his body, a laundress sees the essence of a man in the fact that he wears underwear, yet others see it in his ability to earn money. What, then, is the real essence of man?–Schiller asks and answers: there is no such thing. It is created by people at will.

Different people really do see the essence of a thing differently. It does not follow, however, that no such essence exists. This only shows that people proceed in their understanding of a thing's essence from its various aspects and connections, which are infinite in number. People make an absolute of them and thereby distort reality. Essence, however, being the totality of the necessary aspects and connections of the given thing, exists

regardless of whether or not it is understood correctly and whether all or only one of its aspects are reflected.

Some idealists, such as Plato, Hegel, Santayana, and Whitehead, recognise the objective and real existence of essences, though they consider them as ideal. Plato and Santayana, for instance, held that essences formed a special world, the true reality comprising the supreme being. Hegel thought essence to be the concept of an object, retained irrespective of all changes in the object.

Dialectical materialists hold that essences expressed in an ideal form exist in man's consciousness, not in the surrounding world. Being in man's consciousness, they do not constitute a supreme being in relation to the outside world; on the contrary, they are dependent on this world, inasmuch as their content is derived from this world and is its picture, a copy of some of the aspects and connections of objective reality.

c) The Interconnection Between Essence and Phenomenon

According to dialectical materialists, the essence of material things is material. It is the totality of the necessary aspects and connections existing independently of man's consciousness. Essence is intrinsically linked with phenomenon, revealing its content exclusively in and through the phenomenon. Phenomenon, on the other hand, is also inalienably linked with essence, and cannot exist without it. Lenin stressed this interconnec-

tion between essence and phenomenon. He wrote: "The essence appears. The appearance is essential."[1]

Being a form through which essence manifests itself, a phenomenon differs from it in that it expresses essence in a distorted way. In capitalist society, for example, phenomena indicate that people's destinies and their material well-being depend on the relations of things, on the play of commodity prices on the market. Actually, however, all this depends on the relations among people, which are formed in the process of producing, distributing, and consuming material goods.

A phenomenon expresses essence and at the same time adds new features and aspects to it that stem not from the essence, but from the external circumstances surrounding a thing, from its interaction with the environment. For this reason, a phenomenon is always richer than essence. This is easily seen in comparing the value of commodities with their prices. The prices of a particular commodity are always more varied (and in this sense richer) than its value, since, in addition to the dependence on the amount of social labour required to produce a unit of this commodity, they express the dependence on many external factors, such as the supply-and-demand ratio for this commodity on the market.

Moreover, if a phenomenon's content is determined not only by the essence (the totality of the internal necessary aspects and connections of a

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 253.

thing), but also by its environment and its interaction with other things (which are continuously changing), the content of this phenomenon must be fluid and changeable, whereas the essence is something stable, surviving all these changes. The prices of a particular commodity, for instance, fluctuate continuously, whereas its value remains stable for a certain time. Similarly, the material well-being of the population, especially of the workers, in a capitalist country changes from one period (or phase) in the development of production to another, particularly from a revival to boom, and then to crisis and depression. But the totality of people's production relations (their essence), which determines their material well-being, remains relatively stable.

Lenin expressed this pattern in the correlation of essence and phenomenon in the following way: "...The unessential, seeming, superficial, vanishes more often, does not hold so 'tightly', does not 'sit so firmly' as 'Essence'."[1]

Being stable in relation to a phenomenon, essence is not absolutely immutable. It changes, but not so fast as a phenomenon. This is because, as a phenomenon develops, certain necessary aspects and connections are enhanced and begin to play a more important role, while others recede or disappear totally. The transition of capitalism from the pre-monopoly stage to that of imperialism is an example. At the pre-monopoly period in the development of capitalism, when free

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 130.

competition and commodity export reigned supreme, monopolies did not play any significant role, whereas at the imperialist stage free competition, though continuing to exist, is drastically reduced by monopoly, which becomes a universal phenomenon and begins to play a dominant role in society. Moreover, the export of commodities is pushed into the background, giving way to the export of capital. This shows that one and the same essence undergoes certain changes within its limits.

10. Possibility and Reality

a) The Concept of Possibility and Reality

When exploring the essence of the object under study, cognition goes back to the past and traces the history of its inception and development. Once the essence is revealed, cognition may anticipate the future and find out, in addition to what the object was in the past and what it is now, what it will be in the future. In other words, once a phenomenon's essence i.e. the totality of its necessary aspects and connections (laws) is established we may draw conclusions as to its real and possible states.

Reality is that which actually exists, whereas possibility is that which may occur under relevant circumstances.

One may argue that if reality is that which actually exists, it cannot be distinguished from possibility, inasmuch as possibility, too, actually

exists. Indeed, possibility exists actually, but only as a capacity of matter to change, under certain conditions, from one thing or qualitative state into another. In this sense, i.e. when it is able to change into something else, possibility constitutes an aspect of reality and, naturally, possesses an intrinsic quality, such as real existence.

When, on the other hand, we treat possibility as something not yet existent, we mean qualitative states or characteristics into which the given phenomenon must change under relevant conditions, not the ability of one phenomenon to change into another. These characteristics do not possess the property of real being, they are as yet non-existent in reality, but they may appear.

Thus, by possibility we mean properties, states, processes and things that are non-existent, but which may appear owing to the fact that reality possesses the intrinsic ability to change from one thing into another.

Having materialised, possibility becomes reality, so reality may be defined as materialised possibility, whereas possibility may be defined as potential reality.

b) A Critique of Idealist and Metaphysical Views of Possibility and Reality

The question of possibility and reality has been attracting philosophers' attention since ancient times. Plato's solution, for instance, was to distinguish possible from actual or real existence. He held that the world of ideas and ideal essences

possessed the property of real being, whereas the world of things possessed possible being. Since it is in a state of possibility, the world of things could not change into reality and acquire real existence. There was, Plato believed, a necessary division between real and possible being.

In contrast to Plato, Aristotle rejected the existence of an insurmountable wall between possibility and reality, although he acknowledged the separate, independent existence of these two categories. He believed that the possible can turn into the real, and vice versa. He considered primordial matter to be pure possibility, while the form that ultimately merged with God, who was the form of forms, was in his view pure reality. The blending of form with matter resulted in the appearance of qualitatively definite things possessing possible and real existence and changing when one opposite (possibility) changed into another (reality).

According to Aristotle, the transition of possibility into reality did not occur as a result of forces and tendencies inherent in a thing—it was connected with the action of external factors, of outside force, i.e. of a certain really existing thing. From a thing existing as a possibility, he believed, there always emerged a thing existing in reality, as a result of the action of another thing, also existing in reality.

Proceeding from Aristotle's proposition, Thomas Aquinas substantiated the necessary existence of pure reality acting in such a way that a particular possibility turns into reality. Only

God, he said, can perform the role of this (pure) reality.

The metaphysical separation of possibility from reality and their absolutisation inevitably lead to idealism, to a search for a doer who can blend possibility and reality and thereby create the multitude of things and phenomena we observe in the surrounding world.

Giordano Bruno resolutely opposed attempts to divorce possibility from reality. In his view, possibility cannot exist outside and independently of reality–it is inherent in it.

Hobbes developed this idea. He proved that possibility and reality are closely interconnected and stressed that they have one and the same origin.

Kant, however, was of another opinion. Possibility and reality, he said, are not inherent in things or the outside world–they are just the characteristic features of the human mind, of its cognitive faculties. "...The difference of possible from real things," he wrote, "is one that counts only subjectively for the human understanding."[1]

Hegel thoroughly criticised Kant's subjectivist view of possibility and reality. He showed that as applied to the development of thought possibility stems from reality. He demonstrated the dialectics of the transformation of one into the other.

Dialectical materialism gave a materialist ex-

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[1] Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urtheilskraft*, Leipzig, 1878, S. 288.

planation and scientific substantiation to the laws governing the interconnection of possibility and reality, which Hegel had guessed.

c) The Interconnection Between Possibility and Reality. Types of Possibility

A possibility turns into reality only under certain conditions. The possibility of a socialist revolution in capitalist countries, for instance, may only turn into reality if a general crisis breaks out in a particular country, if the lower strata no longer wish to live as before and the upper layers can no longer govern as before, when the poverty and hardships of the oppressed classes are more intense than usual and their activity rises, and, lastly, when the revolutionary class becomes able "to take revolutionary mass action *strong* enough to break (or dislocate) the old government".[1]

Conditions are the totality of factors necessary for translating possibility into reality.

The transformation of certain possibilities into reality does not mean that the number of possibilities is reduced. The realisation of some possibilities brings about the emergence of others. They are engendered by a new reality. Reality cannot exhaust its possibilities by changing from one qualitative state into another, because they are limitless.

Any phenomenon constitutes the unity of a multitude of different and opposing aspects and ten-

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 214.

dencies, each of which possesses the ability of change, under certain conditions, into another or into its opposite. Every phenomenon therefore has many different possibilities. Taking into account their characteristic features, these possibilities may be divided into the following types: real and formal, abstract and concrete, reversible and irreversible, co-existing and excluding, pertaining to essence and to phenomenon.

Possibilities stemming from the necessary aspects and connections of an object and from the laws governing its functioning and development are called real; possibilities stemming from accidental connections and relations are called formal.

The possibility of organising the economies of socialist countries on a planned basis is an example of a real possibility. It stems from the dominant position of public ownership of the means of production–a necessary factor in socialist countries. The possibility of a worker becoming a capitalist is an example of a formal possibility. It is not based on necessity, nor does it follow from the laws governing the functioning of the capitalist mode of production–it stems from external factors and an accidental concurrence of circumstances. The laws of capitalism presuppose, in fact, quite the opposite–a worker in capitalist society must always remain a worker.

Being engendered by the necessary aspects and connections of reality, real possibilities differ as regards their connection with the conditions necessary for their materialisation. Depending on this

connection, they are divided into abstract and concrete possibilities.

A possibility is called concrete when the relevant conditions for its materialisation have appeared or may appear, and abstract when such conditions are absent. For an abstract possibility to materialise, a phenomenon that possesses it must pass through a number of stages of development.

The possibility of economic crises under capitalism is a graphic illustration of a concrete possibility. Relevant conditions may and do form—as reality proves—in developed capitalist countries for this possibility to materialise. While it is concrete with respect to a mature capitalist society, it is abstract if applied to simple commodity production. The conditions necessary for translating this possibility into reality were absent in the framework of simple commodity production which had to pass through a number of development stages for these conditions to form. Simple commodity production had to change into capitalist commodity production, and the latter, in turn, had to reach a certain level of development. It is not accidental, therefore, that the first economic crisis of capitalism broke out as late as 1825.

All possibilities may be divided up into reversible and irreversible, depending on the specific features of the process by which they become reality.

A possibility whose transformation into reality means that the initial reality becomes a possibility in relation to itself is called reversible. A pos-

sibility whose materialisation brings about the conversion of the initial reality into an impossibility is called irreversible.

The possibility of mechanical motion being converted into heat is an example of a reversible possibility, in so far as, once it has materialised, that which was reality before (mechanical motion) becomes a possibility. Indeed, heat contains the possibility of being converted into mechanical motion. The possibility of the chemical energy of coal being converted into electricity is irreversible, since, once it has been so converted, the initial reality becomes an impossibility–electricity cannot be reconverted into coal.

Being inherent in one and the same phenomenon, different possibilities are interconnected and interdependent. Depending on the nature of their interconnection, possibilities may be divided into co-existing and exclusive.

A possibility whose materialisation does not entail the disappearance of another possibility is called co-existing (in relation to the latter). A possibility whose materialisation brings about the disappearance of another possibility is called exclusive.

The possibility of a peasant becoming a *kulak*, for example, is co-existing in relation to that of his becoming a farm-hand. Having turned into a *kulak* exploiter, the peasant may not stand the competition and be ruined, thus becoming a hired farm labourer. The possibility of private capitalist ownership becoming public socialist property, on the other hand, is exclusive in relation to the pos-

sibility of one man exploiting another. The materialisation of the former brings about the disappearance of the latter–the establishment of socialist property rules out the possibility of exploitation in the given country.

The materialisation of the different possibilities inherent in an object has different effects on its essence. The realisation of some of them does not change the essence, while the realisation of others has the opposite effect–it entails the transformation of the object into another object.

A possibility whose materialisation does not change the essence of an object is called the possibility of a phenomenon. A possibility whose realisation entails a change in the essence of an object and its transformation into another object is called the possibility of the essence.

For example, the possibility for the workers in a certain industry to secure a wage rise as a result of their struggle with the capitalists is the possibility of a phenomenon, inasmuch as its realisation does not change the social essence of the given social groups. The workers remain what they have been before–people deprived of ownership of the means of production, removed from power, and exploited by the bourgeoisie. On the other hand, the possibility of a socialist revolution in a capitalist country is the possibility of the essence. Its realisation results in a change in the essence of the social system–capitalist society turns into socialist society.

Chapter VII

THE BASIC LAWS OF DIALECTICS

As noted, a law is a general, stable and necessary connection or relation within a phenomenon or among phenomena.

Each object has many different general, stable and necessary connections (relations) and is subject to different laws. Not all of these general, stable and necessary connections, however, play one and the same role. Some of them are of major importance, exerting an influence on all the other laws and aspects of a phenomenon, and determine to a greater or lesser degree the functioning and development of this phenomenon as a whole; others are of secondary importance and determine the functioning and development of a few particular aspects of a phenomenon. The first group constitutes basic laws, while the second–non-basic laws.

The division of laws into basic and non-basic is characteristic of both special sciences and philosophy. Philosophical laws, the laws of dialectics in particular, are not of equal value either. Some of them influence all laws and characterise the process of development as a whole, whereas others play a subordinate role and characterise only separate aspects of this process. The first group

makes up the basic laws of dialectics, while the second–the non-basic laws.

The basic laws of dialectics include that of the transition of quantitative into qualitative changes, that of the unity and "struggle" of opposites and that of the negation of negation.

The non-basic laws of dialectics include the law of causality, the law of form being determined by content and of form's active influence upon content, the law of the existence or manifestation of the necessary through the accidental, of the interconnection between the general and the particular, between a part and the whole, etc.

Many non-basic laws have been covered in our analysis of the basic categories of dialectics. The basic laws of dialectics will be discussed below.

1. The Law of the Transition of Quantitative to Qualitative Changes

a) The Concept of Quality and Quantity

As we noted in the preceding chapter, each thing (object or process) constitutes a totality of the general and the particular, i.e. that which indicates its similarity with other things and that which distinguishes it from them. But that which distinguishes one thing from another or indicates its similarity to another is *property*. A thing is therefore characterised by an infinite number of different properties some of them showing what it is, others indicating its dimensions or magnitude.

Thus, some properties of chlorine, such as the fact that it is a gas under normal conditions, that it is yellowish-green in colour, poisonous, chemically active and combines directly with most metals and non-metals, indicate what it is. Its other properties, such as the fact that it is 2.5 times heavier than air, that at normal pressure it weighs 3.214 g at 0°C, that 17 protons make up the charge of its atom's nucleus, and that 17 electrons rotate around its nucleus, characterise its quantity.

The totality of properties that make a particular thing what it is, is called its quality. The totality of properties indicating a thing's dimensions or magnitude is called its quantity.

The basic qualities of the thing under study must be distinguished from its non-basic qualities. Since the interconnection of each thing with other real phenomena varies, at one time and in one relation the thing in question manifests certain of its properties, while at another time and in other relations it reveals others. For this reason, under certain conditions a thing will show one concrete non-basic quality, but under other conditions another quality. The totality of the properties that the thing revealed under the given conditions and relations will constitute a concrete quality in every particular case. For example, by performing certain labour operations, a man reveals properties indicating what he is as a labourer, and constituting his quality as a labourer under the given conditions. In this case he may be a manual labourer, a fitter, an engineer or an office worker. In other relations the man will reveal his other

properties, in still others–still other properties, and so on. In each case he will reveal a new concrete quality. A man marries, for example, and thus becomes a husband in this relation; he begets children and becomes a father in relation to them; he is elected to parliament, which reveals his new quality in this relation–he becomes a deputy.

Besides properties that reveal themselves in certain relations and under certain conditions, only to disappear in others, a thing possesses properties that it has always, in any relation and under any conditions. The totality of these properties constitutes the basic quality of the thing. In contrast to non-basic qualities which characterise a thing only in definite relations, its basic quality characterises the thing in all relations. It is inseparable from the thing, emerges together with it and changes only when the thing changes into another thing.

Man's basic quality is made up, for instance, of properties, such as his consciousness, ability deliberately to transform his environment and create the material wealth necessary for his vital activities, capacity to live in society only, i.e. together with other people. The fact that water is a substance made up of two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen constitutes its basic quality, whereas its non-basic qualities include, among other things, the fact that it may be either a liquid, a solid body, or a gas, depending on concrete conditions.

b) The Essence of the Law of the Transition of Quantitative to Qualitative Changes

Qualitative changes in a thing are a result of accumulated quantitative changes in it, which, having reached a certain limit, inevitably turn into qualitative changes, while the latter exert their own reverse influence on the quantity and, in turn, cause changes in its characteristics.

Indeed, whatever qualitative difference we take, we shall always find that its emergence is necessarily connected with some quantitative differences. The qualitative differences between oxygen and ozone, for instance, are a direct result of the different quantities of atoms that make up the molecules of the given substances. The molecule of oxygen consists of two atoms, while that of ozone–three. Moreover, two substances such as laughing gas (N_2O) and nitrogen pentoxide (N_2O_5) differ greatly as regards their quality–the former is a gas, whereas the latter is a solid. As to their chemical composition, however, the only difference is that the molecule of nitrogen pentoxide contains five times as much oxygen as that of laughing gas. Or take Mendeleyev's periodic system of chemical elements. It shows that a purely quantitative difference of protons in an atom's nucleus causes corresponding changes in the quality of chemical elements.

Quality and quantity, however, possess relative independence, so a quantitative change does not always entail a qualitative one. The quality of water, for instance, would not change if its quantity were increased or reduced. Water is water

whether its quantity is one glassfull or a big basin, or is but one drop. Similarly, a table will remain a table whether we make it smaller or larger.

But all this applies within certain limits. Quality is not immune to quantitative changes. Sooner or later an increase or decrease in a certain quantitative aspect will inevitably cause a qualitative change. Thus, we cannot change the quantity of water *ad infinitum*–a drop of water can be reduced up to a certain limit below which its quality instantly changes. For common water, the weight of one of its molecules constitutes this limit below which water becomes qualitatively different substances–hydrogen and oxygen. Moreover, we cannot keep on making the table infinitely smaller or larger and retain its quality–should we make the table considerably larger or smaller, in one case it will become a shed or a support, while in the other it will turn into a toy or a model.

To sum up, quantitative changes do not entail qualitative ones only up to a certain limit. *The limit within which quantitative changes do not entail qualitative changes is called measure.*

Thus, qualitative changes occur only when quantitative changes go beyond the limit of a certain measure. This being so, if qualitative changes do not occur always, but only when quantitative changes reach a certain limit, beyond the confines of the relevant measure, it becomes evident that qualitative changes are the result of quantitative ones, that qualitative characteristics are caused by quantitative ones, and qualitative differences by quantitative ones.

Qualitative differences that emerge as a result of certain quantitative changes are not passive in relation to them. They exert a reverse influence and cause corresponding changes in the quantitative characteristics. Socialism (as a new quality) has replaced capitalism (as an old quality) and has given rise to new quantitative characteristics, such as different production growth rates, a different degree to which the material and cultural needs of the working people are satisfied.

This law-governed interconnection and interdependence of quality and quantity, of qualitative and quantitative changes constitutes the essence of the law of the transition of quantitative changes into qualitative ones, and vice versa.

c) A Critique of Metaphysical Views of the Interconnection Between Quantity and Quality

Although the above proposition is obvious, metaphysicists reject it, maintaining that quality and quantity are not interconnected and cannot pass into one another. The contemporary US philosopher Sydney Hook, for instance, declares it to be absurd. He writes: "...Although quantities may vary and qualities may vary and the relationship between the variations of both may be described by continuous or discontinuous functions ... it is absurd to say that quantity ever becomes quality or that quality becomes quantity."[1] According to him, quantity cannot become

[1] Sydney Hook, *Dialectical Materialism and Scientific Method*, Manchester, 1955, p. 20.

quality because the latter "is logically prior to quantity" and can, in general, exist without it.

The statement that quality is logically prior to quantity is true. In cognising the world, man proceeded historically from cognising quality to comprehending (revealing) quantity. This in no way means, however, that qualitative changes are not the result of quantitative ones. In knowledge, we are sometimes compelled to go in the direction opposite to the actual one. What we observe in the process of cognition, however, cannot serve as sufficient grounds for drawing conclusions as regards reality. The objective world should be judged on the basis of the laws governing reality itself, not the laws of knowledge.

James Feibleman, a contemporary British philosopher, also rejects the interconnection between quality and quantity. He says that quality and quantity cannot be interconnected, for one of them (quality) is revealed through sensation, while the other (quantity)–through the thinking process. This is far from true–both quality and quantity are cognised not only through sensations, but also through thought. If this were true, however, it would not follow at all that quantity and quality are isolated, since that which we sometimes isolate in the process of cognition would not necessarily exist separately or isolate itself in objective reality.

In contrast to metaphysicists, dialectical materialists, proceeding from the data provided by the natural sciences, recognise the interconnection between quality and quantity, between qualita-

tive and quantitative changes. Moreover, they consider this to be a major law governing the motion and development of matter.

d) A Leap as a Universal Form of Transition from One Quality Into Another

While they are interconnected and interdependent, quantitative and qualitative changes are fundamentally different from one another. Quantitative changes occur slowly, latently, gradually, continuously, while qualitative changes occur abruptly, openly, in a leap-like manner, as a break in continuity.

A leap is the process by which the quality of a thing is transformed, a transition from one state into another.

As a break in the continuous quantitative changes of a thing, a leap is dependent on the latter's nature, on its specific essence. Phenomena that differ by their nature involve different forms of leaps. For example, in one form an electron and a positron change into a pair or a threesome of photons, in another a substance changes from a liquid into a gaseous state, in yet another one species of animal changes into another. The nature and form of the leap also depend on the concrete conditions under which it occurs. Phenomena that are similar in nature will make the transformation into a new qualitative state in different ways under different concrete conditions. In the USSR, for example, where land was nationalised immediately following the triumph of the Great October Socialist Revolution, it became

possible in the course of the socialist transformation of agriculture largely to bypass the lowest and medium forms of cooperative production society, and introduce its higher form at once, i.e. the collective farm, which combines collective labour on publicly owned land with social ownership of the basic means of production and distribution of produce according to the quality and quantity of labour contributed by the collective farmer. In the other socialist countries this process develops in a different way. Here the socialist transformation of small-commodity farm production was carried through under conditions of private ownership of land. This had an effect on the form of the transformation. It was due to this, in particular, that various semi-socialist forms of production were widely applied in these countries, combining socialist ownership of some means of production with private ownership of land. Moreover, distribution based on the quality and quantity of labour inputs co-existed with that based on the quality and quantity of the land and other means of labour given over to the social economy.

For all their various forms, leaps can be subdivided into the following two types: 1) leaps taking the form of an explosion; and 2) leaps occurring comparatively slowly, by way of gradually accumulating the elements of a new quality and discarding those of the old.

An explosive-type leap occurs rapidly, abruptly, often as a single blow. The entire quality undergoes changes in the process. In contrast, a leap occurring through the gradual accumulation of the

elements of a new quality and the disappearance of those of the old quality, takes place slowly. Only certain parts of the quality–not all of it–undergo changes. One qualitative characteristic is changed first, then another, then yet another, and so on, until the entire quality is transformed.

The explosion of dynamite is an example of an explosive-type leap: all the aspects of the initial quality are involved in the abrupt transformation of one substance into another. As applied to society, an explosive-type leap can be exemplified by a social revolution in the form of an armed uprising.

The development of new species of plant and animal is an example of a leap occurring by way of the relatively gradual accumulation of the elements of a new quality and the disappearance of those of the old quality. The transformation of one species of plant or animal into another under natural conditions occurs, as a rule, through the gradual appearance of one new quality after another that correspond to the changed environment, and through the gradual disappearance of the properties that do not correspond to such changes. A peaceful take-over of political power by the proletariat is an example of this type of leap, as applied to society.

e) Evolution and Revolution

The nature of a leap and the way it proceeds serve as the basis for subdividing all leaps into leaps that take the form of an explosion and others

that occur through the gradual accumulation of the elements of a new quality and the disappearance of those of the old quality.

Leaps may, however, be classified on the basis of another feature, viz. the nature of qualitative changes, that which changes in a thing, its quality. Since a thing has basic and non-basic qualities, changes in the basic quality differ essentially from those in non-basic qualities. Changes in the basic quality of a thing presuppose a change of its essence and its transformation into another thing, whereas changes in non-basic qualities occur within the bounds of one and the same essence and do not entail the transformation of the thing into another thing. Bearing this in mind, leaps can be divided into revolutionary and evolutionary.

Revolution is a leap bringing about a radical break in the old qualitative basis and a change in the essence of a thing.

Evolution is a leap entailing transition to a new quality within the given essence of a thing, without a radical break in the existing qualitative basis.

A transition from one socio-economic system to another, such as that from capitalism to socialism, is an example of revolution. The transition from pre-monopoly to monopoly capitalism and from socialism to communism are examples of evolution.

In this particular sense the concepts "revolution" and "evolution" are applicable to all spheres of reality. They take a somewhat different meaning, however, when used to express the laws

governing the transition from one qualitative state to another in certain particular fields in the life of society. As applied to society, not every leap accompanied by a radical break of the existing qualitative basis and a change in the essence of the given material entity is a revolution, but only one resulting in the emergence of more developed qualitative states, i.e. a transition from a lower to a higher phase. A transition from a higher to a lower phase is called counter-revolution. The transition of political power from the bourgeoisie to the proletariat, for instance, which represents the socialist mode of production called upon to replace the historically outdated capitalist mode of production, is revolution. The temporary restoration of power by the bourgeoisie overthrown in the course of revolution, is counter-revolution.

As regards evolution, if applied to historical development, it is a reform which is a type of transformation presupposing that the qualitative basis of the existing economic and political system, i.e. its essence, is preserved.

Today, the bourgeoisie spares no efforts to prolong the existence of the capitalist social system and frequently resorts to reforms which, though introducing certain insignificant changes in particular spheres of society, leave intact the existing mode of production and the exploitation of man by man engendered by it. Addressing the 25th CPSU Congress, Leonid Brezhnev said: "Capitalism did its utmost, so to speak, to keep in step with the times, to apply various methods of economic regulation. This made it possible to sti-

mulate economic growth but, as the Communists foresaw, it could not remove the contradictions of capitalism."[1]

2. The Law of the Unity and "Struggle" of Opposites

a) The Concepts of Opposite and Contradiction

Each thing has an infinite multitude of aspects which interact and cause changes in one another. These changes move in similar, different or opposite directions; they may reflect one and the same or different trends.

Aspects in which changes move in opposite directions and which have opposite trends of functioning and development are called opposites, while the interaction of these aspects constitutes a contradiction.

The processes of assimilation and dissimilation in a living organism, for example, are opposites. Assimilation constitutes a trend towards creating certain component parts of an organism out of substances in the environment, while dissimilation is a trend towards decay or decomposition. Antagonistic classes, such as the proletariat and the bourgeoisie under capitalism, constitute another example. These classes have directly opposite interests and patterns of action. Indeed, the proletariat is waging a continuous struggle for wage increases, whereas the bourgeoisie is always seek-

[1] L. I. Brezhnev, *Report of the CPSU Central Committee and the Immediate Tasks of the Party in Home and Foreign Policy. XXVth Congress of the CPSU*, p. 33.

ing wage cuts. The proletariat wants its representatives to be elected to legislative bodies, while the bourgeoisie does its best to prevent this.

b) The Unity of Opposites

Though opposites have different trends of functioning and development and different directions of change, thereby excluding each other, they do not eliminate each other, but co-exist in an unbreakable unity and interdependence. Assimilation and dissimilation in a living organism are interconnected and presuppose each other. The proletariat and the bourgeoisie in capitalist society are intrinsically interconnected, too. The bourgeoisie cannot exist as a class without the proletariat and, vice versa, the proletariat disappears as an exploited class together with the elimination of the bourgeoisie, and turns into the working class of socialist society.

The way in which opposites presuppose each other and are inseparably interconnected is a major form through which their unity manifests itself.

A certain degree of coincidence between some of their aspects and the presence of common properties constitute another form through which the unity of opposites is revealed. Since opposites are aspects of one and the same thing and characterise one and the same essence, they must have something in common and a number of their properties must coincide. The north and south poles of a magnet, for instance, are aspects of one and

the same physical phenomenon, of one and the same essence.

Being different aspects of one and the same thing, opposites not only exclude, but also interpenetrate each other; they not only express the difference between the inseparably interconnected aspects, but also their identity.

The identity of the quantitative characteristics of opposites is expressed, in particular, in the form of the equilibrium or balance of forces. The balance of opposites manifests itself at a certain stage in the development of a contradiction, when an equilibrium of opposite forces and trends sets in. The correlation of revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces in Russia in October 1905 is an example of the balance of opposites. Tsarism at that time was, as Lenin put it, "*no longer* strong enough", while "the revolution [was] *not yet* strong enough to win".[1] The balance of forces does not mean that the "struggle" of opposites fades away or becomes weaker. On the contrary, at that stage in the development of contradictions the "struggle" of opposites becomes especially acute.

The transition of opposites into each other when they exchange places is the supreme manifestation of the identity of opposites. The transformation of the proletariat into the dominant class and the bourgeoisie into the suppressed class is a relevant example with respect to the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

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[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 414.

The moment at which opposites pass into each other is the culmination in the development of opposites. At this stage, the contradiction is solved and the thing passes from one qualitative state into another. Taking account of the special importance of this moment in the development of a contradiction, of this manifestation of the identity of opposites, Lenin defined dialectics as the study of the identity of opposites, of the laws governing their passing into one another. "Dialectics," he wrote, "is the teaching which shows how opposites can be and how they happen to be (how they become) identical,–under what conditions they are identical, becoming transformed into one another, –why the human mind should grasp these opposites not as dead, rigid, but as living, conditional, mobile, becoming transformed into one another."[1]

c) The Relativity of the Unity and the Absoluteness of the "Struggle" of Opposites

Contradiction, being the interaction of opposites, includes both their "struggle" and their unity. These two aspects of the essence of contradiction, however, are not equal: the "struggle" plays the leading role. It is absolute, just as the motion it causes. The unity, on the other hand, is relative.

The absoluteness of the "struggle" of opposites is expressed in the fact that struggle is involved at every stage in the existence of a thing and its transformation into something else. It takes place

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 109.

at the emergence of any concrete unity resulting from the "struggle" of opposite forces or trends. It exists within the unity, causing its emergence and development. It is present and is especially pronounced when this unity breaks down and a new one appears. It is the "struggle" of opposites that causes the disintegration of the old unity and its replacement by a new one, corresponding more closely to the new environment.

In contrast to the "struggle", the unity of opposites is temporary. After emerging as a result of this "struggle", it exists for a certain time, until the relevant contradiction matures and is resolved. Then the unity disappears, giving way to a new one. The latter, having existed for a certain period, also breaks down and is replaced by another as a result of the "struggle" of the opposites inherent in it. This process goes on *ad infinitum*. Unity, therefore, changes, while the "struggle" remains. Existing within each one of the consecutively changing unities, the "struggle" is also a link connecting one unity with another and ensuring historical continuity in the development process.

The relativity of the unity, therefore, is expressed through its temporary existence, through its transient nature. But there are other forms in which the unity's relativity is manifested, such as the incomplete coincidence of opposites, the incomplete coordination in their functioning and development, and, lastly, the transient nature of their balance.

d) Contradiction and Difference

We defined contradiction as the interaction of opposites, by which we mean a mature contradiction. As a rule, however, a contradiction does not appear in a ready-made form. It first emerges and exists in an immature form. Difference is the universal form of being that gives rise to contradiction. Difference is the first, immature form through which contradiction manifests itself.

Not any difference, however, is a contradiction. There are differences everywhere, between all phenomena and all the aspects of one and the same phenomenon. If all differences were contradictions, it would be impossible to isolate any other connections and relations apart from contradictions, which would be the only form of interconnection between objects and their aspects. Meanwhile, other forms of relations and connections, besides contradictions, such as harmony, coordination, correspondence, and so on, exist in objective reality.

Only a difference that involves a divergence of trends or directions of change, in particular interacting aspects or phenomena, is called a contradiction. In other words, only aspects that have different trends, different directions of change and development form a contradiction. There are essential differences, for instance, between separate branches of socialist production, but there may be no contradiction between them if there is the necessary correspondence in their functioning and development. A contradiction arises only when

different trends or a certain discord begin to appear in the course of development of these branches due to the inefficiency of planning or economic organisations.

e) The Universality of Contradictions

Metaphysicists deny the universality of contradictions. Some, including the German philosopher Nicolai Hartmann, believe that all being is not contradictory in nature and that "neither what exists in itself, nor the mind in itself is contradictory, but the requirement that the mind should embrace all that exists, without exception".[1] Others, such as Sydney Hook, recognise the existence of contradictions in the mind only, rejecting their existence in the outside world.

As distinct from metaphysicists, dialectical materialists hold that contradictions are universal. They exist in any field of reality and in any material entity as testified by scientific data and social experience. In mechanics, for instance, there is action and counter-action, in electricity–negative and positive charges, in magnetism–the South and North poles, in mathematics–plus and minus. Modern physics has shown that the nature of "elementary" particles is contradictory. An electron and a photon, for instance, constitute the unity of a wave and a corpuscle. An atom, too, is a unity of opposites, with electrons, protons, and

[1] Quoted in Max Hartmann, *Die philosophischen Grundlagen der Naturwissenschaften*, Jena, 1948, S. 36.

other particles interacting within it. Contradictoriness is a necessary condition for the existence of living organisms as well. Any living organism functions and develops on the basis of the interaction of such opposite processes as assimilation and dissimilation. Contradictions between consumption and production, and between the productive forces and production relations, are inherent in society. In knowledge, too, there are contradictions between analysis and synthesis, the objective and the subjective, the abstract and the concrete, etc.

Thus, contradictions are present in any field of reality. Contradictoriness is universal. It is intrinsic in all that exists in reality and consciousness.

f) Contradiction—the Source of the Motion and Development of Reality

The source of the motion and development of matter and knowledge constitutes an exceptionally complex problem over which many philosophers have racked their brains in the past. They did not recognise the contradictoriness of being and were compelled, therefore, either to reject motion, or turn to God, declaring Him the final cause of all changes in the world. Heraclitus was the first to propose that contradiction is the source of motion. Hegel, however, developed this idea on an idealistic basis, with respect to pure thought, but only dialectical materialism substantiated this proposition on a truly scientific basis. Engels formulated it in the following way: motion "...by

the continual conflict of opposites and their final passage into one another, or into higher forms, determines the life of nature".[1]

How does contradiction act as a source of motion and development? Contradiction, as we have already noted, is the interaction of opposites. The action of one opposite force on another, however, invariably involves relevant changes in the interacting aspects of a thing, and also in the thing itself. This means that the very existence of contradictions presupposes the motion and also the development, under relevant conditions, of the corresponding phenomena.

The interaction of such opposite aspects of society's life as production and consumption, for instance, inevitably causes changes in each of them, and then in society as a whole. In this way people's requirements influence and change production, which takes account of these requirements and develops in the required direction. As production develops, however, so do requirements–some are replaced by new ones, which set production new objectives. Attaining them, production develops further and becomes more advanced, and so do requirements. The changed requirements set production yet new objectives, so production changes again, and this goes on *ad infinitum*. The interaction of production and consumption thus underlies the continual change in production and requirements. At a certain stage in the development of society, a need arises for im-

[1] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 211.

proving the production relations within which production functioned, and for abolishing one form of ownership of the means of production in favour of another. Changes in the relations of production correspondingly reshape the entire social organism and bring society to a new, higher stage of development. In this way the interaction of opposites causes phenomena to change and pass into a new qualitative state. All this is a graphic illustration of how contradiction acts as a source of the motion and development of matter and consciousness.

g) Types of Contradiction

Every phenomenon has a multitude of different contradictions. Their roles in its existence and development are far from equal, so the need arises to classify contradictions.

The following types of contradiction are usually distinguished: internal and external, essential and non-essential, basic and non-basic.

The interaction of the opposite aspects inherent in one and the same phenomenon is called an internal contradiction, whereas that of the opposite aspects inherent in different phenomena is called an external contradiction.

The interaction of electrons and protons in an atom, assimilation and dissimilation in a living organism, the productive forces and production relations in society, are all examples of internal contradictions. Contradictions between society and nature, between individual animals of different

species, and so on, are external contradictions.

Internal and external contradictions play different roles in the development of a phenomenon. Internal contradictions play a decisive role, for their development and resolution cause a thing to pass into a new qualitative state, a new stage of development. External contradictions also exert a pronounced influence on the development of a thing, but this influence materialises through internal contradictions–it may be positive or negative, it may speed up or slow down the development. The interaction of a particular living organism with the environment may either enhance its development or cause its death, depending on the actual conditions under which this organism lives.

The interaction of opposite aspects of the essence of an object is called an essential contradiction, whereas that of the opposite aspects of accidental connections and relations is a non-essential contradiction.

The contradiction between the social nature of production and the private form of appropriation in capitalist society is an example of an essential contradiction, since it characterises the essence of the capitalist mode of production. Contradictions between bourgeois parties battling for votes during an election campaign or contradictions between various sectors of socialist production are non-essential contradictions, for they do not concern the essence of the phenomena in question nor characterise this essence.

Essential contradictions play a decisive role in the development of things. Their resolution alone

leads to a change in the essence of an object and to its transformation into a new object. As regards non-essential contradictions, their resolution does not change the prevalent situation. The elimination of contradictions between certain bourgeois parties, for instance, does not affect the essence of capitalist society, which remains the same. As regards the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, however, its resolution changes the essence of the social system and causes the transformation of capitalism into socialism.

Essential contradictions are subdivided into basic and non-basic. *Contradictions that determine all the more or less essential aspects of a phenomenon, playing this role at every stage of its development, are called basic. Contradictions that characterise one particular aspect of a phenomenon are non-basic.* The contradiction between the social nature of production and the private form of appropriation in capitalist society, for example, and that between "dying capitalism and nascent communism"[1] during the transition from capitalism to socialism, are basic contradictions. The contradictions between town and countryside, between mental and physical labour inherent in capitalist society and characterising only separate aspects of society's life, rather than society as a whole, are non-basic contradictions.

The above types of contradiction are intrinsic to all fields of reality. Emerging in a certain

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 107.

concrete field or form of motion, contradictions take on specific features that distinguish them from contradictions in other fields or forms of the motion of matter. Thus, the contradictions in inanimate nature possess some features, while those in the animal world possess others, and those of the realm of knowledge yet others. The contradictions in the life of society also have specific features. Taking this into account, the founders of dialectical and historical materialism singled out antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions in society.

h) Antagonistic and Non-antagonistic Contradictions

Contradictions between classes or other social groups that have opposite interests are antagonistic, while contradictions between classes or other social groups that have common interests as regards vital problems are non-antagonistic.

Contradictions between slaves and slave-owners, peasants and landlords, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie are antagonistic, while contradictions between the working class and the peasantry, and between various socialist countries, are non-antagonistic.

Antagonistic contradictions are characterised by the fact that when they are resolved the unity within which they existed is eliminated. Thus, the resolution of the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie brings about the transformation of capitalism, in which this contradiction was inherent, into socialist society.

The situation is quite different with non-antagonistic contradictions. Their resolution does not eliminate the unity within which they existed, but rather strengthens and consolidates it. When the essential differences between the working class and the peasantry, for instance, are overcome, socialist society is not eliminated but becomes more monolithic, mature and perfect.

Since irreconcilable class interests underlie antagonistic contradictions, the latter, as a rule, have a tendency to intensify. It does not follow, however, that this tendency manifests itself in all cases, under all circumstances. Conditions may obtain which paralyse this tendency and the antagonistic contradiction, resolved step by step, will ease off, rather than intensify. The development and resolution of the antagonistic contradictions between the national bourgeoisie and the working class in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is a relevant example. The above contradictions ease off as they are gradually resolved.

In contrast to antagonistic contradictions, non-antagonistic ones do not tend to intensify. On the contrary, since the social groups representing the aspects of these contradictions are interested in ensuring society's further progress, the contradictions tend to ease off, smooth out and become resolved, without reaching extreme forms.

Antagonistic contradictions are resolved through an acute class struggle, whereas non-antagonistic contradictions are overcome by persuasion, criticism and self-criticism. This in no way means that such methods cannot be employed under certain

conditions to resolve antagonistic contradictions. When the bourgeoisie realises the senselessness and futility of resisting the advance of society towards socialism, the antagonistic contradictions between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat may be resolved by peaceful means, by resorting to persuasion and re-education on a wide scale of that section of the bourgeoisie that accepts socialist transformations and cooperates on a voluntary basis with the proletariat and other groups of the working people. The experience of transforming private capitalist enterprises in the German Democratic Republic and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam are examples of the widespread use of persuasion and re-education in overcoming antagonistic contradictions.

3. The Law of the Negation of Negation

a) The Concept of Dialectical Negation

A specific feature of dialectical negation is that it is connected with development. This does not, of course, mean that negations inherent in regressive changes or circular movements do not follow the laws of dialectics. The latter are universal, they manifest themselves in any process of change, and are intrinsic to any motion. The name "dialectical negation", in the course of which a passage from the lower to the higher occurs, is conventional. It stems from the specific features of dialectics as a science. As distinct from metaphysics, which rejects development, dialectics is

the theory of development. Teachings on the laws and forms of development constitute the main content of dialectics, for which reason the negation inherent in development was called dialectical, in contrast to all the other negations accepted by metaphysicists in some form or other.

Dialectical negation is objective. It is the negation of one qualitative state and the formation of a new one. It stems from the development of the internal contradictions of a phenomenon and results from the "struggle" between internal opposite forces and tendencies; it is a connecting link between the lower and the higher. It performs this function because it is not simply the destruction of a certain qualitative entity, but also the creation of something new. It is a negation in the course of which only that which has outlived itself, which contradicts the new conditions of existence, is destroyed. That which is positive in it is retained and develops further within a new phenomenon that is taking shape in the process of negation.

Lenin stressed this specific feature of dialectical negation when he wrote: "Not empty negation, not futile negation, *not sceptical* negation, vacillation and doubt is characteristic and essential in dialectics,–which undoubtedly contains the element of negation and indeed as its most important element–no, but negation as a moment of connection, as a moment of development, retaining the positive. . . ."[1]

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 226.

In the process of negation–the disappearance of some living organisms, for instance, and their replacement by other, more developed ones–everything positive that has been accumulated during the preceding historical development is retained and developed further. Thus, the first living creatures' ability to renew chemical components within themselves and to organise and coordinate to a certain extent all chemical reactions did not disappear even when the creatures themselves did. This ability was enhanced in the new organisms that replaced them. The cellular composition of a living organism is a similar case. Having first been developed by the simplest unicellular organisms, it dit not disappear following transition to more complex organisms, but has been retained and became a necessary element of their structure. Moreover, the productive forces created by preceding generations are not destroyed during the negation or overthrow of one socio-economic system and the emergence, on its basis, of another one. On the contrary, being the basis for the emergence of a new, more advanced economic system, they receive wider scope for further development within the bounds of the new socio-economic system.

To sum up, *a specific feature of dialectical negation is that it is a universal form of connection between the lower and the higher.*

b) The Correlation of Concepts "Dialectical Negation", "Leap" and "Resolution of Contradictions"

A student of the basic laws of dialectics usually encounters some difficulty in comprehending the

difference between a leap, dialectical negation, and the process of resolving contradictions. This is not surprising, for these three concepts deal with one and the same process–the transformation of one object into another. But they reflect its different aspects. The concept "resolution of contradictions" signifies that the transformation of one thing into another occurs as a result of the "struggle" of opposites, their transition into one another and the elimination of the given contradictory unity. The concept "leap" expresses the law according to which this process takes place through the transition of quantitative into qualitative changes, through the transformation of the given qualitative state and the break-off of its further being. The concept "dialectical negation" reflects the fact that the transformation of one thing into another occurs both through the destruction of that within it that does not correspond to the changed state and conditions of its being and through the retention and further development in a new phenomenon (emerging as a result of the negation of the old one) of all that is positive and corresponds to the new conditions and trends of development.

In contrast to the concept "resolution of contradictions", which marks the elimination of a certain contradictory unity, pointing to the finite nature of being, the concept "dialectical negation" marks the elimination of a certain object or qualitative state, pointing to the infinite nature of being. Moreover, as distinct from the concept "leap", which marks the moment of discrete ex-

istence of a certain object or qualitative state, the concept "dialectical negation" marks the moment of the continuous nature of being, the moment of connection between the negated and the negator, and continuity of development.

c) The Essence of the Law of the Negation of Negation

In the course of dialectical negation of some phenomena or qualitative states by others, a moment comes when the newly-emerging phenomena or qualitative states repeat a certain stage that has already been passed. This repetition is partial, rather than full, and formal, rather than essential. What happens is not an actual turn-back, but, as Lenin put it, a would-be turn-back. The newly emerging phenomenon or qualitative state repeats the stage that has already been passed, but on a new, higher basis.

The establishment of socialist public ownership in the course of a proletarian revolution, for example, is the repetition of what already existed under the primitive communal system, in which public ownership also prevailed. But, though a repetition of what had existed at the initial stages of society's development, socialist ownership has certain specific features. Primitive communal ownership was the consequence of a low level of development of society's productive forces, which excluded the possibility of procuring on one's own the material wealth necessary for survival, whereas socialist ownership is the outcome of an extremely high level of development of the produc-

tive forces. It is established when the productive forces outgrow the confines of private ownership and in order to develop further require the latter to give way to public ownership.

Or take another example: the worker under simple commodity production performed all labour operations related to the making of a certain commodity. Following the appearance of capitalist manufactories, he turned into the partial, as Marx put it, or detail, according to Lenin, worker and began to perform only some of the operations, or even just one of them. Today, automation of production compels the worker once again to start performing a multitude of various operations. The repetition of what has already been and has come back is evident here, but in this case, too, it has occurred on a new, higher plane. In the past, the simple commodity production worker performed all labour operations himself, with his own hands. Now all these operations are performed by machines. His role is to operate them.

Here is another example from the history of knowledge. It is an established fact that, in the Middle Ages, alchemists advanced the idea that chemical elements could be transformed into others. Later (in the 17th to 19th centuries), when the atomistic theory substantiating the immutability of atoms reigned supreme, the first idea was replaced by another one, according to which chemical elements could not be transformed into others. Today scientists have come to the conclusion that, given the right conditions, some chemical elements can be transformed into others. A turn-

back to the past is evident here, too, but it has occured on a new basis. Alchemists drew their conclusions from sheer fantasy, while modern scientists proceed from the knowledge of the objective laws of natural and artificial radioactivity of certain substances.

The repetition of the past in the course of negation of some objects or qualitative states by others is not an accidental phenomenon, but a universal law of development. It is a necessary consequence of the fact that the process of development entails the transition of certain particular phenomena (aspects, properties) into their opposites. Having done so, a phenomenon (aspect, property) again turns into its opposite in the course of its development, thus returning, as it were, to its initial state, repeating what has already been passed, but it does so on a necessarily new and higher basis. This is because a phenomenon (aspect, property) that has returned to its initial stage retains in a sublated form the positive content that has emerged during its subsequent development.

Thus, in the course of negation of some objects or qualitative states by others, the repetition of what has already been passed occurs on a new, higher basis.

This inevitably raises the question: "How many negations are needed for a developing phenomenon to repeat the path already covered?"

In simple cases a turn-back, a repetition of the initial qualitative state occurs after two negations. In the development of a seed, for example, the initial state is repeated after two negations: the

seed is negated by the plant and the plant by the seed.

A turn-back or repetition of what has already been passed after two negations is not the only form through which the law of the negation of negation manifests itself. The repetition of the stages passed may occur after a greater number of negations, e.g. 4, 8, and so on. This is because the transformation of a developing phenomenon (aspect, property) into its opposite does not occur in every negation. Frequently, in the course of negation a thing does not turn into its opposite–it passes into some other qualitative state which differs from the initial one, but is not its opposite. Transformation into its opposite is only the ultimate result. The transformation of private property, for instance, into socialist public ownership occurs, as the history of human society proves, through three negations: 1) slave ownership is negated by feudal property, 2) feudal property is negated by bourgeois ownership, and 3) bourgeois (and all private property in general) is negated by socialist public ownership, which is the opposite of private property.

Thus, the number of negations for repeating the passed on a new basis in the development of a certain field of reality may vary greatly. It depends on the nature of a developing phenomenon and on the concrete conditions of the development process.

A specific feature of the law of the negation of negation is thus the repetition of the passed on a new basis, a return, as it were, to the old.

It was this regularity that Lenin noted when he defined the essence of this law. The negation of negation, he wrote, is "a development that repeats, as it were, stages that have already been passed, but repeats them in a different way, on a higher basis. . ."[1].

But if a return to the past, the repetition of the passed stages on a new basis is a universal law of development, the latter cannot proceed straightforwardly–it takes on a spiral form.

* * *

We have discussed the basic laws governing the interconnection of matter and consciousness, and also the universal properties and relations of reality and the universal laws of dialectics. The latter, however, do not exist independently of particular laws which operate in the specific fields of reality, but rather alongside and through them. These particular laws which are specific for a certain field of reality, affect the universal laws and underlie their specific manifestations in every field of reality. The specific manifestations of the laws governing the interconnection between matter and consciousness and of the universal laws of dialectics in society's life are studied by historical materialism which constitutes a major part of the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism. The second half of this book deals with the topical questions of historical materialism.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 54.

Historical materialism

Chapter VIII

THE SUBJECT-MATTER OF HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

1. Historical Materialism as a Part of Marxist Philosophy

Historical materialism studies the laws governing the interrelation between matter and consciousness and the universal laws of being with respect to life in society.

This does not mean, of course, that dialectical materialism does not study manifestations of the universal laws of the motion and development of matter in society. Dialectical materialism, faced with the task of studying the laws inherent in all the spheres of being, cannot avoid tracing how the latter function in social life. While studying the manifestations of these laws in society, however, dialectical materialism focusses its attention on only those elements, aspects and relationships that are common to all the other spheres of being. Historical materialism studies the functioning of the universal laws in social life in order to reveal their specific content, conditioned by the peculiarities of the social form of the motion of matter.

By establishing the specific nature of the laws (studied by dialectical materialism) in social life, historical materialism discovers the general

laws which govern the functioning and development of human society.

So, whereas dialectical materialism establishes the laws of interconnection of consciousness and matter in general by offering a solution to the basic question of philosophy, historical materialism, while dealing with this problem as applied to society, reveals the laws of the interconnection between *social being* and *social consciousness*, the material and spiritual life of society. These law-governed patterns, though they are a manifestation of the general laws applying to the whole of reality, have their own specific content and hence are independent laws governing the operation of the social organism.

In the context of historical materialism, such a general law as the law of the unity and "struggle" of opposites, for example, takes the form of that of class struggle in an antagonistic society, of that of the interconnection of production and consumption and of other laws of social development. The law of the transformation of quantitative into qualitative changes, when applied to society, takes the form of the law of social revolution and of other laws of qualitative transformation of various aspects of social life; the law of the negation of negation takes the form of the law of the replacement of socio-economic formations in the process of historical development and recurrence of past events at a higher stage taking place in all spheres of social life, and so on.

Thus, *historical materialism studies the laws of interrelationship between matter and consciousness*

and the general laws of being in their specific manifestations in social life, and discovers, on this basis, the general laws governing the functioning and development of society as a specific form of the motion of matter. Hence, the subject-matter of historical materialism is the general laws governing the functioning and development of society.

2. Historical Materialism and the Other Social Sciences

Besides historical materialism, many general laws of social life are studied by specific social sciences such as linguistics, the legal sciences, ethics, aesthetics, political economy and the historical science. So the question inevitably arises as to what distinguishes the subject-matter of historical materialism from that of specific social sciences and how it interrelates with them.

As a rule, specific social sciences study certain individual aspects of society, the laws governing the functioning and development of various spheres of social life. Linguistics, for example, studies the laws governing the functioning and development of language, the legal sciences deal with the law, ethics studies the laws of the rise and development of moral norms and views, political economy investigates the laws of society's economic life at various stages of development, etc. Unlike these sciences, *historical materialism studies not separate spheres of social life but*

society as an integral organism, as a special, relatively stable system of the motion of matter, in which all aspects of social life are organically interrelated and interdependent. Thus, it is the laws of the interrelationship and interdependence of all aspects and links of a social organism that are studied by historical materialism.

Besides the specific social sciences already mentioned, there is another social science that studies society as historical materialism does, as a whole, not as individual aspects of its social life. This is general history. So, how to differentiate between the subject-matter of historical materialism and that of historical science?

Historical materialism studies specific historical events with a view to discovering, on their basis, the general laws governing the functioning and development of society, while historical science aims at explaining specific events, proceeding from the relevant laws of social development. In other words, historical materialism, by studying specific social phenomena, strives to reveal *the general,* inherent in any society at a given stage of development, while historical science, looking at the same events, strives to detect *the particular* and explain it proceeding from the relevant general laws of historical materialism.

Thus, though historical materalism and historical science deal with the same subject–society as a whole–their subject-matter differs.

3. The Limitations of Pre-Marxian Sociological Views

Definite views of society, of its motive forces and the laws of its development had already appeared in ancient times. They emerged together with philosophy which initially was the only science not just studying the general forms of being, but mainly explaining specific social and natural phenomena. Once they had emerged, sociological views did not remain intact, but were constantly changing, especially as society passed from one stage of development to another. *For all the diversity of pre-Marxian sociological views, they were all idealist in character.* The essence of social life, its changes and development were deduced from some spiritual origin–divine reason, the absolute idea, the development of science, religion or public opinion, etc. Thus, many philosophers in Ancient Greece held that social life was guided by the gods, who directly intervened in it and determined the destiny of individuals and nations. In the Middle Ages, theologians and philosophers deduced the essence of social life from the divine nature. For example, according to Thomas Aquinas, freedom, slavery, class distinctions and state power were all of divine origin. He held that God had created man free, but had sent him slavery as a punishment for his sins. Besides, according to Thomas Aquinas, God created "dirty people"–peasants, townsmen and artisans to do the "dirty" work of society. As far as state power is concerned, Thomas Aquinas

held that it is a unifying principle in the state, interrelated with the latter as God is with the Universe, or the soul with the body. The 18th-century French materialists Helvetius and Holbach explained the changes within the state and in people's living conditions by the changes in public opinion. Hegel deduced the essence and laws of development from the development of the absolute idea. Ludwig Feuerbach related society's transition from one stage of development to another to the change of religions.

While revealing the idealism of pre-Marxian sociological views, we must not presume that there was nothing rational or scientific about them. Some pre-Marxian philosophers and sociologists also suggested certain correct ideas, that were materialistic in essence. No matter what brilliant conjectures they represented, however, these propositions could not play a major role in the sociological theories developed by these thinkers, which were basically idealistic.

Thus, for example, the ancient Greek philosopher Democritus, while opposing Pythagorean views on the intervention of the gods into human social life, put forward the idea of the importance of material needs for society's development. Democritus believed that "the need itself served as mistress in all matters". At the same time, he considered production as the outcome of free creativity.

The ancient Greek philosopher Protagoras assigned an important place in social life to the development of material culture. He demonstrated

that, with the development of culture, in particular with the mastering of fire and the emergence of crafts, people began to live in organised communities, such as towns. At the same time Protagoras remarked that, for the people to pass to this new form of social life, they should learn to determine what is just and what is unjust. He claimed that only the gods imparted that ability to human beings.

The 18th-century French enlightener Charles Montesquieu expressed the profound idea that law depends on the mode of production. "The laws," he pointed out, "are very closely connected with the way different nations procure their subsistence."[1] At the same time, he deduced the content of laws from the form of government, i.e. from a political factor that, according to his theory, played a decisive role.

A number of rational ideas on the origin of private property, classes and the state were expressed by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Private property, he asserted, emerges due to the fact that people, with their inherent capacity for self-improvement, devise new instruments of labour and start cultivating the land. Advanced instruments allow cultivation to be improved and, in the long run, they cause the emergence of private property, which, in turn, brings about the division of society into the rich and the poor and causes conflicts between them. The in-

[1] *Oeuvres complètes de Montesquieu*, Tome I, Paris, 1950, p. 384.

tensifying class struggle, according to Rousseau, determines the need for the formation of a state to guard private property and consolidate the domination of the rich. Rousseau succeeded in providing a general, rather realistic, description of the social processes that caused the emergence of classes and the state, but he failed to maintain a consistently materialistic approach and follow this principle throughout. Ultimately he departed from the materialistic approach to the question of the origin of the state, and took an idealistic stand, claiming that it was the rich who invented the state and deceived the poor as to the necessity of establishing state power. According to Rousseau's interpretation, the state is, therefore, the outcome of people's conscious creativity.

The proposition put forward by the 18th-century French materialists (Helvetius, Holbach and others) to the effect that man, with all his desires, views and feelings was a product of education and the environment in which he lived, was in general a materialistic and correct point of view. "People. . .," Helvetius wrote on this score, "are born either with no disposition, or with dispositions to all opposite vices and virtues. They are, therefore, just a product of their education."[1]

But alongside this proposition, the French materialists developed the idea of the dependence of the social milieu on legislation and the political structure, which are formed under the influence of

[1] *Oeuvres complètes de Mr. Helvetius*, Tome 3, Londres, 1777, p. 297.

public opinion. "Experience," Helvetius wrote, "proves that the character and spirit of peoples change together with the form of their government and that different forms of government impart to one and the same nation a high or low, a constant or unstable, a courageous or timid character."[1] Social life and its development were thus, in the final analysis, determined neither by material factors nor by economic relations, but by legislation, politics and public opinion.

The French historians of the Restoration (Guizot, Thierry and Mignet) went somewhat further than the 18th-century French materialists in comprehending the essence of social life. They established that political institutions are determined by social relations, which depend on the property status. "It would be wiser," Guizot wrote, for example, "to begin with the study of society, in order to learn and understand its political institutions. Before becoming a cause, institutions are a consequence; society creates them before it begins to change under their influence; and instead of judging the condition of a people from the system or the forms of its government, we must first of all investigate the condition of the people, in order to judge what should be and what could be its government."[2] And he continued: "In order to understand political institutions, we must study the various strata existing in society and

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] Georgi Plekhanov, *Selected Philosophical Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1974, p. 497.

their mutual relationships. In order to understand these various strata, we must know the nature and the relations of landed property." Having expressed the idea of the dependence of political institutions on social relations, and that of the latter on the property relations, the French historians could not, however, reveal the actual reasons behind the "property relations". A reference to human nature as a factor influencing the property relations explained nothing, but merely proved that they failed to go beyond the ideas put forward by the Enlighteners, who tried to link all social problems to "human nature".[1]

The Utopian socialists (Owen, Saint-Simon and Fourier) made definite strides towards revealing the driving forces behind social progress. Though similar to the 18th-century French materialists and historians of the Restoration, the Utopians based their social views on the supposed existence of man's unchanging and true nature, but they did not confine themselves to asserting that property relations are the basis of the social system, as the French historians had done at the beginning of the 19th century. They tried to explain why these relations played such an important part. Saint-Simon, in particular, saw the needs of production and industry as the reason behind the major role of property relations in the development of society. He explained the transfer

[1] Georgi Plekhanov, *Selected Philosophical Works*, Vol. 1, p. 498.

of property from the feudal lords into the hands of the bourgeoisie and the political changes accompanying this process in France by the needs of industrial development. Saint-Simon was right in singling out production as a determining factor in social life, but he referred the development of industry to changes in the public consciousness and considered it the result solely of the mental improvement of mankind. Thus, here again, consciousness, as the spirit, represented the ultimate cause of society's existence and development.

Finally, the Russian revolutionary democrats Belinsky and Chernyshevsky pointed to the people's "material conditions of existence" and their material requirements as factors playing the major part in human life. But they also acknowledged the decisive role of science and education in historical progress.

Thus, all pre-Marxian philosophers, both idealists and materialists, proceeded, in the final analysis, from the spirit in trying to explain the essence of social life and the motive forces of history, i.e. they were, in fact, idealists.

How can one account for this? Why was idealism so predominant in the sociological views of pre-Marxian philosophers and sociologists?

Interactions between material substances in nature are effected without the interference of any conscious creature and it is here that, in Engels' words, "nothing of all that happens—whether in the innumerable apparent accidents observable upon the surface, or in the ultimate results which

confirm the regularity inherent in these accidents –happens as a consciously desired aim."[1]

It is people–creatures possessing consciousness who set definite aims and try to fulfil them–who act in society. There, wrote Engels, "nothing happens without a conscious purpose, without an intended aim."[2]

It is this very circumstance that confused the pre-Marxian materialist philosophers and made them abandon the materialist basic principle in explaining natural phenomena, in favour of an idealistic approach to the phenomena of social life. This is what determined the fact that *they (the pre-Marxian materialists) considered the ideal driving forces in society to be the ultimate causes of events and did not seek more deep-seated motive forces which determined these driving forces.* Furthermore, due to this very exaggeration of the role of the spirit in social life–*the activities of the masses escaped the attention of the pre-Marxian sociologists, and it was great personalities, enlightened monarchs and law-makers who were regarded as the creators of history.*

Pre-Marxian materialists, while proceeding from ideological motives in explaining social phenomena and their causes spurring people to historical activity, failed to unveil the reasons behind these motives. As a result, they abandoned their materialist principles in favour of idealist views.

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[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works,* Vol. 3, p. 365.

[2] *Ibid.,* p. 366.

Hegel tried to correct the mistake of the materialists in defining the ultimate causes of historical development. He stated that the historical activities of people depended neither on their will nor wish, but were guided by the "world spirit" which assumed the form of historical necessity implicit in individual events. Though people act in the pursuit of their aims, Hegel pointed out, they effect something which is beyond their intentions and objectives and which they themselves do not realise. The realisation of what is beyond people's immediate goals or consciousness, becomes the historical mission of particular nations which, being themselves pawns in the hands of the "world spirit", are called upon to implement relevant ideas determining this or that stage of historical development, and represent, in effect, the development stages of the "world spirit". For example, according to Hegel, the history of ancient Greece was nothing but an elaboration of "forms of beautiful individuality", or the realisation of the concept of a "work of art" as such.[1]

While showing the 18th-century materialists' narrow understanding of the ultimate causes of peoples' historical activity, and being correct in that the direct motivations of historical personalities were not the ultimate causes of historical events, and that here are other driving forces behind them, Hegel, nevertheless, failed to provide a scientifically backed solution to this problem. He

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 367.

looked for the ultimate causes of historical development not in history itself but outside, not in the material sphere of social life but in the spirit, in the logical laws of development of the absolute idea existing somewhere outside and independently of human society and history.

4. The Development of Sociology into a Science

In contrast to Hegel, Marx saw the cause of peoples' ideal motive forces not in the "world spirit", but in the activities of the people making up the society. He discovered the simple fact, hidden however under ideological cover, that "mankind must first of all eat, drink, have shelter and clothing, before it can pursue politics, science, art, religion, etc.; that therefore the production of the immediate material means of subsistence and consequently the degree of economic development attained by a given people or during a given epoch form the foundation upon which the state institutions, the legal conceptions, art, and even the ideas on religion, of the people concerned have been evolved, and in the light of which they must, therefore, be explained, instead of *vice versa*, as had hitherto been the case."[1] *Marx applied the materialistic principle of the primacy of matter and of the secondary nature of consciousness to society and found that, in society,*

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 162.

it is the material conditions of people's life, the production of material wealth and the resultant economic relations that are the decisive factors, not spiritual activity or consciousness.

Having revealed the decisive role of material production in human life, Marx naturally came to the conclusion that the decisive role in social development is played by the producers of material wealth–the masses of the people–and to recognition of the class struggle as the driving force behind historical development.

Pre-Marxian sociologists, while advancing a specific aspect of consciousness as the determining factor in the functioning and development of society or explaining the essence of social life on this basis, were unable to notice the recurring and regular nature of social phenomena typical of different countries, and to differentiate between important and secondary events in the complex intermingling of social phenomena. The outcome was, at best, a description of these phenomena, or a compilation of facts, or untreated data, incapable of revealing the laws of history. And without a knowledge of these laws, there could not be any genuine social science. *Marx's identification of production relations as the key factor, allowed him to notice recurrences in the life of different nations, to single out the most common patterns in their social structure and to express these common features through the general concept of socio-economic formation.* According to Marx, a socio-economic formation is characterised by definite production relations, which come into

being on the basis of the given level of development of the productive forces, by the relevant political and legal superstructure corresponding to production relations, and by the forms of social consciousness, the family, the way of life, etc. This generalisation made it possible to pass from a description and arbitrary appraisal of social phenomena, from the point of view of the ideas favoured by this or that author, to strict scientific analysis of them.

Finally, in contrast to earlier sociologists who, basing themselves on man's definite ideas and aims and unable to see that they were dependent on material social relations, linked such ideas and aims to a spiritual factor, Marx by reducing all social relations to relations of production, and the latter to the level of development of the productive forces, was able to present *the development of socio-economic formations as a process of natural history proceeding on the basis of objective laws independent of the will or wishes of people.*

By making this discovery Marx was the first to turn sociology into a science[1]. "Just as Darwin," wrote Lenin on this score, "put an end to the view of animal and plant species being unconnected, fortuitous, 'created by God' and immutable, and was the first to put biology on an absolutely scientific basis by establishing the mutability and the succession of species, so Marx put an end to the view of society being a mechanical

[1] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, pp. 140-42.

aggregation of individuals which allows of all sorts of modification at the will of the authorities (or, if you like, at the will of society and the government) and which emerges and changes casually, and was the first to put sociology on a scientific basis by establishing the concept of the economic formation of society as the sum-total of given production relations, by establishing the fact that the development of such formations is a process of natural history."[1]

5. Historical Necessity and People's Conscious Activity

The major feature distinguishing social life from living and non-living nature is the fact that the protagonists here are conscious beings who set definite goals and try to reach them. Nothing similar is met in nature, where changes do not result from the fulfilment of conscious aims, but are due to the interplay of material bodies or the collision of an infinite number of diverse spontaneous forces and trends.

Bearing this in mind, many pre-Marxian sociologists, while conceding the existence of an objective necessity or a definite regularity in the development of natural phenomena, nevertheless rejected it on the historical plane, in social life. According to them, society is not governed by any laws or necessity, since it develops on the basis of people's free will, or their free creative activity.

[1] Ibid., p. 142.

Marx and Engels proved that these ideas do not reflect the real state of affairs. Though there are acting, conscious beings in society, who are trying to reach definite aims, this does not exclude historical necessity or regularity which are brought about by these actions, determining the inevitability of results occurring independently of people's consciousness or will.

Indeed, although every person acts consciously and according to his will, the aims people set conflict with each other, and prove unattainable either in substance or due to a lack of means for realising them. On the other hand, even if these aims are to some extent attained, they do not ultimately lead to the desired results. For example, when people worked to create the steam engine, their only concern was to raise productivity in some industries. They had no idea that they were creating the instrument which more than any other was to revolutionise social relations throughout he world. They had no idea that this would, by concentrating wealth in the hands of the minority and turning the overwhelming majority of the population into proletarians, give the bourgeoisie social and political domination at first, and then cause a class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, which must inevitably result in the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the abolition of all class antagonisms.[1]

Take another example. When people interact with each other by selling or buying goods, em-

[1] See F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 181.

ploying or hiring, they are pursuing some definite aims, giving little thought to what relations form as a result and what the social changes are caused by these relations. When a peasant, for instance, sells his grain and thus comes into contact with world grain producers on the world market, he is not conscious of this nor is he conscious of the kind of social relations that are formed on the basis of exchange.[1]

Furthermore, the wealthy citizens of ancient Rome, while buying up plots of land from poorer landowners, simply wanted to increase their wealth, and could not possibly have foreseen let alone wished that the latifundia would destroy the republic.

Thus, an individual in society pursues his own deliberately set aims, while the total outcome of a host of individual actions, undertaken with diverse aims in mind, does not depend on the will and consciousness of individuals, but merely expresses some necessary trend, determined by these individuals' material living conditions and activities.

Clashes of innumerable intentions and actions lead, in history, to a state similar to that in nature, which is deprived of any consciousness: intrinsic necessity and regularity manage to find their way through the mass of diverse accidental interactions, links and relations, and the objective laws of motion come to the surface.

Thus, despite the highly specific nature of so-

[1] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 323.

ciety, its functioning and development are subject to objective laws expressing the necessity of definite historical events and of the law-governed pattern of the historical process.

But how can the inevitability of some events be combined with man's freedom of action?

Some critics of Marxism hold that historical necessity contradicts the freedom of human behaviour and that the inevitability of the historical process excludes any freedom. In fact, people's uninhibited activity, far from contradicting objective necessity, is based on it.

True, man can act freely only when he has cognised the objective laws, necessary linkages and interrelations inherent in a particular sphere and takes them into acount in his actions. If, on the other hand, he does not know these laws and necessary linkages, he cannot be free in taking his decisions relating to the given sphere. Then he acts at random and, naturally, is carried away by spontaneous forces based on intrinsic laws, which deprive his behaviour of any genuine freedom. Thus, freedom lies not in independence from any necessity and the laws of reality, but rather in their cognition and "in the possibility ... of systematically making them [the laws of nature– *A. S.*] work towards definite ends". Freedom is nothing but "the capacity to make decisions with knowledge of the subject".[1]

This applies not only to man's actions relating to changes in natural phenomena, but also to those

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, pp. 136-37.

aimed at changing social phenomena, i.e. not only to his control over the processes of nature, but also to his regulation of processes in social life. Freedom of action in the social sphere, however, is attained only when society makes the transition to socialism and then to communism, since only socialism creates the objective conditions for the conscious application of the laws of social activity and for the conscious use of historical necessity. It is only from this moment on that people start to create history consciously, in accordance with its objective laws and its intrinsic necessity. As for antagonistic systems, due to the domination of private ownership over the means of production and the exploitation of man by man, the necessary conditions do not exist for the balanced and conscious utilisation of the laws of social development, and this results in these laws opposing man "as laws of nature foreign to, and dominating him"[1] and excluding genuine freedom of man's historical creativity.

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 336.

Chapter IX

SOCIETY AND NATURE

1. On the Unity of Society and Nature

Society, being a special form of the motion of matter, emerges on the basis of the further development of the material forms of the motion of matter that constitute nature, particularly its biological form. Its immediate ancestor is the animal herd, a biological group based on food, sex, defence and other instincts.

The animal herd was transformed into human society under the direct influence of labour and the "instrumental" activity of man's animal ancestors to meet their needs. While looking for food or defending themselves from enemies, highly developed animals began using natural objects (sticks, stones, etc.) in order to reach for a fruit, to crack the hard shell of a nut, to hit an attacking beast, and so forth. These actions often had positive results, which conditioned the emergence of a corresponding reflex and the habit of using natural objects as "instruments" in undertaking certain actions associated with meeting the body's needs. At first such use of natural objects was a casual and temporary phenomenon, but later, the obvious efficacy of such uses lent them increasing importance for the life of the given species of animal.

While systematically applying natural objects to achieve a predetermined result, attempts were made to create the necessary "instruments" by processing certain natural objects. As this tendency developed it conditioned a gradual transformation of reflex and instinctive actions into conscious and purposeful activity.

By creating the instruments required to influence nature, man's ancestors became less and less dependent on it, since man then waged a struggle for his existence not by changing his biological qualities and functions, but by improving the instruments with which he affected nature and purposely changed it.

Corresponding ties and relationships were established between individuals acting jointly in the creation and use of instruments. These ties grew stronger with the development of this activity and gradually overtook in importance the biological ties underlying this association. As these relationships became more and more important for the existence of a tribe, formed by individuals, this herd developed into a human society–a higher form of matter's being, qualitatively different from previous forms of living nature.

As we can see, labour–the process taking place between man and nature, "in which man of his own accord starts, regulates, and controls the material re-actions between himself and Nature"[1]–represented the basis of the existence and development of this new form of the motion of matter.

[1] K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 173.

Labour is the prime and basic condition for human life, and its existence, above all, distinguishes human society from an animal herd. Thanks to labour man becomes separate from nature and "makes it serve his ends, *masters* it."[1]

Society, which took shape as a particular form of motion of matter, did not sever its ties with the forms that preceded it and constituted a sphere of animated and unanimated nature, but incorporated them in a transformed way. In fact, society was formed through the interaction and interrelation of intricate material systems, viz., by people with physical, chemical and biological processes, subject to corresponding physical, chemical and biological laws. While all these laws express the organic linkage and unity of society and nature, they are not determining in society, do not constitute its essence or express its qualitative features. Subject to definite physical, chemical and biological laws, man's functioning and development are part of a definite system of social relations with their specific laws which determine the specific features of society and the people that make it up.

Moreover, society's organic ties with nature are also expressed by the fact that the former cannot exist without its interaction with the latter. As mentioned earlier, labour, which provides the means of subsistence, is the basis of society's emergence and existence. At the same time it represents that interaction of man and nature, in

[1] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 179.

the course of which man purposely changes some natural objects and phenomena, adapting them to people's specific needs.

The interaction of society and nature is thus a prime condition for the functioning and development of society. In the course of this interaction, nature produces a definite impact on society, while the latter influences nature. Let us see how this mechanism works.

2. On Nature's Impact on Society

The part of nature that comes into contact with society is conventionally called the geographical environment.

The geographical environment consists of surrounding lands and bodies of water, the climate, flora and fauna, minerals, and so on. Society's existence and development undoubtedly depend on all these factors. Nature is a handy store of foodstuffs and means of labour. While utilising nature's wealth and the properties of its component material forms (objects, bodies and processes), people create the necessary conditions for existence and produce the goods needed for their lives. Nature or, more precisely, the geographical environment thus produces a considerable impact on people's life in society and on society's current state and development.

For example, "the greater the natural fertility of the soil and the favourableness of the climate, so much less is the labour-time necessary for the maintenance and reproduction of the producer. So

much greater therefore can be the excess of his labour"[1] and the accumulation of social wealth. The greater amount of minerals a country possesses, the greater possibilities it has for development of production. And the more varied is its wealth and other natural conditions, the more diverse are people's activities. Man's diverse activities are inevitably conducive to "multiplication of his wants, his capabilities, his means and modes of labour."[2]

The influence of the geographical environment on society's development was especially pronounced in the early stages of mankind's existence. During this period, the emergence and development of any specific type of production or activity was directly dependent on the geographical environment and its specific features. Thus, for example, fertile land was conducive to the emergence of land cultivation, rivers and lake conditioned the appearance of fishing, large forest areas stimulated the development of hunting, while steppe and hilly areas provided favourable conditions for taming wild animals and raising stock.

The geographical environment thus makes a considerable impact on society's development, but how important is it?

The proponents of so-called geographical determinism hold that the influence of the geographical environment on society is determining, and

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[1] K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 480.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 481.

that society's nature and its development depend entirely on environmental factors. The ideas involved here are in no way new. Even in the ancient times some historians, such as Strabo (Strabon), referred to the geographical environment when describing the life and mores of different peoples. Geographical determinism has become widespread, however, in the period of the development of capitalism–when various "theories" have emerged explaining the nature and development of society by temperature conditions, terrain, the presence and location of water, and so forth.

The 18th-century French philosopher Montesquieu, for instance, held that society's moral principles, the forms of state power and legislation were all determined by the climate. In particular, a hot climate, according to Montesquieu, engenders laziness, cowardice and inevitably leads to the emergence of slavery, while a cold climate, on the contrary, imparts a certain strength to people's minds and bodies, enabling them to perform prolonged, strenuous, great and courageous acts, as a result of which northerners are free people. He wrote : "The pusillanimity of peoples of hot climates almost always led them to slavery, while the courage of peoples of cold climates maintained them free."[1]

The Russian sociologist L. I. Mechnikov held that water resources play the determining role

[1] *Oeuvres complètes de Montesquieu,* Tome 1, pp. 368-69.

in society. "Water," he wrote, "proves not only to be a vitalising element in nature, but also a genuine driving force in history." It represents a "power" that encourages the development of cultures, progression from the river systems towards inland seas, and thence to the oceans.[1]

The 19th-century British ideologist Henry Thomas Buckle advocated a whole host of geographical agents, such as the climate, soil, relief, and so on, as determining factors in social development.[2]

In the initial period of capitalism's existence, geographical theories played a progressive role, since they were spear-headed against theological doctrines of society and provided secular explanations of social changes. Later on, however, they became increasingly reactionary in character, for they diverted the attention of the working people, notably the proletariat, from the actual reasons behind their oppression and misery, and laid the whole "responsibility" for this state of affairs on the geographical environment–climate, soil fertility, etc.

In the 20th century, geographical determinism, under the title of *Geopolitik*, became the theoretical basis for the imperialist bourgeoisie's militaristic views, thus vindicating aggressive wars and the enslavement of one nation by another.

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[1] See *Historical Materialism*, Moscow, 1950, p. 61 (in Russian).

[2] See H. T. Buckle, *History of Civilization in England*, London, 1891, Vol. I, p. 39.

Such views appeared for the first time in Germany. Their authors claimed that *Lebensraum* (living space), in particular a certain area of land, plays the determining role in society's development. They asserted that accordingly each nation strove to obtain living space for its people, and seize the requisite territory, thus explaining the necessity of struggle for living space between various nations and, consequently, that of wars.

The ideas were well suited to the policies of fascism and so *Geopolitik* was proclaimed the official ideology by the nazis. It was taught as a special subject in all universities of nazi Germany. *Geopolitik* lost its former significance when fascism was defeated in World War II.

The geographical theory of society's development obviously includes the possibility for bourgeois ideologists to draw reactionary conclusions. Its utter insolvency is proved by the fact that it is unscientific and does not correspond to the actual state of affairs. The geographical position is not, in fact, a determining factor in society's development.

If this were the case it would be impossible to explain why nations living under the most diverse climatic and natural conditions and managing their economies both on fertile and poor soils, on hills and plains, on river banks, the shores of seas and oceans, and far away from them, usually pass similar stages of social development. They begin with a primitive classless society based on common ownership of the means of production, then pass to a class society based on private

property, and then through a socialist revolution and the building of socialism to a classless communist society. Furthermore, if the geographical position determined social development, how could it happen that in relatively similar environments, for example, in Europe, the majority of nations have gone through three socio-economic formations (the primitive-communal system, slavery and feudalism), while nations that have taken the road of socialist transformation are already in the fourth socio-economic system.

All this shows that the geographical environment is not a determining factor in social development, which means that it cannot determine state policy either. The policies pursued by a state depend entirely on the ruling class. When reactionary imperialist circles are in power, then irrespective of the country's geographical position the policies pursued by its government would be antipopular and would endanger peace.

3. Society's Influence on Nature

Society, though itself influenced by nature, affects the surrounding nature and brings about corresponding changes in it, thus forming, in one way or another, a new geographical environment. Man, while producing the material goods needed for his life, transports various species of animal and plant from one place to another, thus changing the flora and fauna of the corresponding regions, and even continents. For example, such plants as potatoes, tomatoes corn, tobacco and

some others were brought to Europe from America.

Even plants and animals that spread in any particular area of the world without man's interference, are subject to man's influence. Man is able to change some species of animal and plant by his purposeful activities. Besides, he breeds new species, thus changing the flora and fauna of the given region.

Not only animate but also inanimate nature undergoes changes under the influence of human society. Large amounts of burnt fuel result in a concentration of carbonic acid in the atmosphere, which affects plant growth. By extracting large quantities of minerals from the earth and shipping them as raw materials or manufactured goods to other corners of the world, man changes the qualities of the geographical environment.

Human society's impact on the geographical environment is not, however, always uniform. It changes as society develops, as the means of labour at its disposal improve and the social system changes. As society develops, however, this impact steadily grows. By inventing increasingly sophisticated means of labour, man draws new domains of nature into the sphere of his practical activities and purposely changes them, thus establishing his supremacy over nature.

4. The Role of Population Growth in the Life of Society

As already mentioned, society is an aggregation of people maintaining definite relationships, which are determined by the production and distribution of material wealth. A certain minimum number of people and a certain population density are evidently required for society to function and develop normally. This minimum cannot be constant, since it must change as society passes from one stage of development to another. Changes in the minimum number of people required for society to function normally are necessitated by the fact that, as society progresses, peoples' requirements grow, as do the means of production of material and cultural values needed to satisfy these requirements. The level of development of the means of production at each stage in society's evolution and the relationships of people in the course of the production and distribution of material wealth, determine the number of people needed for production and the other functions of a social organism. The number of people in society is, however, determined by the laws of population growth which, though dependent on the mode of production prevailing in society, do possess a certain independence. The result is that the growth of the population does not always correspond to society's requirements. Thus, in slave-owning society, for example, the population growth lagged significantly behind its requirements, since it was impossible for slaves to have

a family. In capitalist society, on the contrary population growth outstrips the demand in additional human labour, which results in a "surplus" population. This is an inevitable consequence of the spontaneous operation of bourgeois society's economic laws. Striving to increase his profits rather than to satisfy the population's requirements to the maximum, the capitalist extends production until there is an effective demand for manufactured output. The subordination of production development to the interests of capital and its constant growth are the factor that prevents all the workers from being drawn into production, thus causing a relative surplus working population, i.e. excess in comparison with the average requirements of capital.[1]

In socialist society, this obstacle has been eliminated and the aim of production is the maximum satisfaction of the requirements of all people. Since production has unlimited possibilities for development, it provides jobs for all able-bodied members of society, and though improvements in the means of production under socialism also bring about a growth of labour productivity and consequently a smaller input of labour power per unit of output, there is no surplus population. The higher labour productivity brought about by technical progress serves as the material basis for shorter working hours and more spare time, which every member of society requires for his comprehensive development.

[1] See K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 590.

So, the emergence of a relative surplus population is the result of capitalist production, and it becomes a law only under this socio-economic formation. As for other social systems, each "has its own special laws of population, historically valid within its limits alone".[1]

Many bourgeois sociologists, however, associate surplus population not with the historical laws of capitalism, but with definite laws of nature, which supposedly operate irrespective of the social system or mode of production. The first so-called absolute "law" of population was formulated by Thomas Malthus in 1798. According to his theory, the population on our planet is growing much faster than the production of the means of subsistence, so there would always be a definite number of people in society whom it could not maintain and who were consequently redundant.

In recent years Malthusians have begun referring to the situation in those countries that have recently gained their liberation from colonial oppression, and where the development of production is lagging behind population growth owing to the underdeveloped material and technical basis. But this in no way proves that the Malthusians were right. In these countries production lags behind population growth not because of any Malthusian "law", but due to the fact that, for many centuries, these countries were plundered by foreign capitalists. This resulted in the almost

[1] K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 592.

complete stagnation of the material basis of their economies, while their populations continued to grow. All this has brought about a sharp discrepancy between the size of the population and the level of development of national economies. Nowadays, these countries are making considerable efforts to get rid of this discrepancy and there is no doubt whatsoever that, given assistance by the socialist countries, they will sooner or later succeed.

At the same time, the question arises as to whether the earth's population can grow infinitely. Will not this growth cause overpopulation of the planet? Of course, such a possibility does exist for the distant future, but it is an abstract one, and no doubt people in the future communist society will take timely notice of this trend and take due measures to check it. It will not be difficult for them to introduce a balanced regulation of population growth.

Chapter X

MATERIAL PRODUCTION AS THE BASIS OF SOCIETY'S EXISTENCE AND DEVELOPMENT

1. The Concept of Production

As already mentioned, a society, in contrast to a herd of animals, exists not by adapting to nature and consuming the means of subsistence created by it, but by adapting the natural means of subsistence to its needs, by changing the properties of material bodies created by nature, and turning them into the means of subsistence required for people's survival. The transformation of natural objects into people's means of subsistence and material wealth is carried out by acting on nature with specially created implements–the means of labour. This purposeful influence on nature and alteration of its properties in the interests of society is called production. The main elements of production are: (I) *purposeful activity,* (2) *objects of labour* and (3) *means of labour.*

In the labour process, human activity is carried out consciously and is subject to a strictly defined objective. Demonstrating the difference between production activity and instinctive acts of the animal, Marx pointed out this very feature–the conscious and purposeful character of labour operations. "Man," Marx wrote, "not only effects a

change of form in the material on which he works, but he also realises a purpose of his own that gives the law to his modus operandi, and to which he must subordinate his will."[1]

An object of labour is the part of nature that man influences in the process of production and that he changes into an object capable of meeting some of society's needs. For example, ore, coal and oil, which are extracted from the earth and undergo special treatment, are objects of labour.

Both objects existing in their natural form (minerals in the earth, fish in natural bodies of water, virgin forests and lands, etc.) and objects which underwent primary processing through the application of labour (ore in a foundry, cotton in a spinning mill, grain in a mill, flour in a bakery, etc.) may be considered objects of labour. *An object of labour which underwent some previous treatment and which embodies a certain amount of human labour is known as a raw material.* Any raw material is thus "the subject of labour, but not every subject of labour is raw material: it can only become so, after it has undergone some alteration by means of labour."[2]

The thing or complex of things that man places between himself and the object of labour and that serve as the conductor for his influence upon that object are called the means of labour.[3]

Machine-tools, machinery, diverse equipment,

[1] K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 174.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] See *Ibid.*

production buildings, means of transport needed for servicing industrial enterprises and the like, are all means of labour in industry. For agriculture they are agricultural machines and implements used for land cultivation and harvesting, the land under cultivation, inasmuch as it is a part of a complex of conditions required for seeds to germinate, as well as for plants to grow and ripen, transport vehicles used to carry seeds and harvested crops, barns and stores for storing the harvest, and so forth. In livestock-breeding the means of labour include animals raised for their wool, milk, butter and other produce, the stalls in which the animals are kept, machines used for the upkeep and exploitation of animals, etc.

Instruments of labour are a separate category of the means of labour. *Instruments of labour are those means of labour that are used as direct conductors of man's influence upon the object of labour and that cause a corresponding alteration in the latter through their properties (mechanical, physical or chemical).* All sorts of machines and gears, such as lathes, metal-working machines, textile machines, and so forth, as well as the plough, the harrow, the sowing-machine and combine harvester may serve as examples of instruments of labour. The simplest instruments of labour, created by man in the early stages of human society's evolution, were the knife, axe, hammer, hoe, etc.

The objects and means of labour consitute the means of production.

The means of labour play an important role in the production of material wealth. The level of their development determines the character of society's economic system and the degree of man's domination over nature. "It is not the articles made," Marx pointed out, "but how they are made, and by what instruments, that enables us to distinguish different economic epochs."[1]

2. The Productive Forces of Society

a) The Essence of the Productive Forces

The means of labour and the people who put them into operation and produce material wealth thanks to a definite production experience and labour skills, form the productive forces of society.

The production of material wealth is carried out by people. It is human beings who affect nature and transform its substances into means of subsistence. It is therefore obvious that people who participate in production should be included in the productive forces. Moreover, people are the main productive force of society. They represent the creative mainspring, a vital aspect of productive activities.

People affect nature not with their bare hands, not directly, but through the means of labour. The degree to which nature is transformed and the quantity of material wealth produced depend

[1] K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 175.

essentially on the means and instruments of labour used. So, the means of labour, too, must constitute part of the productive forces of society.

While the means of labour are an essential element of the productive forces, it should be stressed that they are a productive force not by themselves, but only in organic unity with man. Isolated from people, who put the machine into operation, the latter is no more than a heap of metal. It is only in the hands of man that an instrument becomes a productive force. The means of labour, being the outcome of people's creative activity, are thus able to fulfil their social function and act as a productive force only within the limits and exclusively as a vital aspect of this activity and its development.

The use of even the simplest means of labour in the creative process presupposes a knowledge of how these means may be applied, and definite skill and experience in using the given means of labour. The greater is the experience in using any means of labour, the better and more efficient are people's actions and the greater is their productive force.

Thus the productive force of society depends not only on the people who participate in the production of material wealth and the means of labour that they use, but also on the experience in using these means and the workers' skill.

The technical organisation of labour, the location of people in the course of production and the division of functions between them, are factors influencing society's productive force. The more

advanced is the organisation of labour and the more rationally are the means of labour and the work force utilised, the greater is society's productive force. While analysing the specific features of simple co-operation and manufacture, Marx specially emphasised the dependence of society's productive force on the organisation of labour. "By decomposition of handicrafts, by specialisation of the instruments of labour, by the formation of detail labourers, and by grouping and combining the latter into a single mechanism, division of labour in manufacture creates . . . a quantitative proportion in the social process of production; it consequently creates a definite organisation of the labour of society, and thereby develops at the same time new productive forces in the society."[1] He amplified: "Not only have we here an increase in the productive power of the individual, by means of co-operation, but the creation of a new power."[2]

It follows that the productive forces represent concrete and objective opportunities available for society to influence nature and the ability that exists in society to produce a definite quantity of material wealth.

b) The Productive Forces of Society and Science

In the early stages of society's evolution, when science was still in its cradle and the instruments of labour were small-scale, primitive and designed

[1] K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 344.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 309.

for manual labour, people were satisfied, as the production of material wealth was concerned, with the empirical knowledge gathered by previous generations in their struggle against nature and accumulated in the means of labour produced and the production experience handed down from generation to generation. With the gradual transition from manual labour to machine production, not only the knowledge acquired by the direct producers in the process of work and training, but also scientific discoveries began to be embodied in the means of labour produced and in the methods of their use. The designing and application of machines was based on systematic use of the laws of nature discovered by science. This made it possible to put the elements of nature into the service of production and replace human labour with them.

In the initial stages, however, the use of science in production was somewhat limited. Scientific laws were only taken into account when creating mechanical means of labour, while production techniques still escaped the attention of science. However, the industrial revolution which began at the turn of the 19th century, soon affected one industry after another. Science began to play an increasingly great role in production. Apart from improving production techniques, it also paved the way for the emergence of new industries. Whereas, in the past, it had been primarily theoretical mechanics that had been directly linked with production, now it was the turn of physics and chemistry, which began to penetrate actively into

the sphere of production. Such discoveries in electricity as, for example, electromagnetic induction, cathode ray and the electromagnetic theory of light gave rise to a new industry—electrical engineering—which was the basis for the invention of the telegraph and telephone, the development of the dynamo and of electric motors, etc., which were destined to play a big part in the technical restructuring of production. The greatest discoveries in chemistry led to the emergence of the chemical industry and to the artificial synthesising of a number of substances needed for production.

The rapid development of machine production provided the necessary base for the development of the experimental equipment that allowed scientists to take a deeper look into nature's secrets. The turn of this century saw great discoveries in physics. The electron theory of matter was developed and the radioactive decay of certain substances (uranium, radium and others) was discovered. Study of the atom and its nucleus, the discovery of ever now elementary particles, and the formulation of the laws of their interaction and inter-transformation gave rise to nuclear physics, quantum mechanics and other branches of science. It became possible to use nuclear power in production and for military purposes.

Together with physics and other sciences, mathematics also showed a spectacular development and its methods began to be employed on a wide scale in all sciences. The use of mathematical methods in various sciences gave rise to new comput-

ing devices, the electronic computers, which can perform thousands upon thousands or even millions of operations per second. Cybernetics, the information theory, mathematical modelling, etc., were born. All the necessary conditions for complete automation of production processes and management were being created. Automation presupposes the use, in the technical devices and production techniques applied, of the most diverse sciences, in particular, physics, chemistry, electronics, mathematics and cybernetics.

All this testifies to the fact that the means of labour and the technology utilised in present-day production become, as Marx put it, an "embodied power of knowledge", materialised science. In the light of this, people who participate in such production can no longer seek support from their own experience and skills, but have to be guided in their practical activities by scientific knowledge related to the given line of production.

The growing ties between science and production necessitate the greater involvement of research establishments. By designing ever better machines and installations, by developing the production techniques for new materials and by defining the ways of making more efficient use of the means of labour, researchers participate, to varying degrees, in the creation of material values.

Hence, science is increasingly turning into a direct productive force, while the productive forces are increasingly becoming a "technological application of science".[1]

[1] K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 584.

The transformation of science into a productive force is thus effected, on the one hand, by creating, on the basis of relevant scientific knowledge, better machinery and by developing new production techniques which better conform to the increased requirements. On the other hand, the people who take part in the production process master the achievements of modern science, and thus facilitate more rational organisation of production and more efficient use of machinery.

3. Relations of Production

The productive forces of people express their relation to nature, and the level of their development shows the degree to which nature is subjugated to the interests of society, the extent to which man dominates over its elements. However, in the process of production people enter into definite relations not only with nature, but also with each other. It is these relations and their definite interconnection which represent the major condition for the functioning and development of production. The transformation of nature in the interests of society may only proceed within the bounds of these relations, thanks to the social ties existing between people. These ties and relations are a social form under which man influences nature and effects its transformation and appropriation. "All production," Marx wrote in this connection, "is appropriation of nature on the part of individuals within and by means of a

particular form of society."[1] In order to produce, men "enter into definite connections and relations with one another and only within these social connections and relations does their action on nature, does production, take place."[2]

The relations which take shape among people in the process of production, distribution and consumption of material goods are production relations.

Since production implies none other than man's influence on the object of labour with the help of definite means of labour, production relations include, in the first place, people's relations to the object and means of labour, i.e. to the means of production. The means of production may or may not belong totally or partially to the producers. Definite relations with the material wealth produced and the relations associated with their distribution are formed on the basis of relations with the means of production. If the means of production belong to the producers, then the material wealth produced also belongs to them, and is later distributed either equally (under the communal form of ownership of the means of production), or according to the labour expended for society's benefit (under the socialist form of ownership of the means of production), or according to the needs (under the communist form

[1] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie (Rohentwurf) 1857-1858*, Moskau, 1939, S. 9.

[2] Karl Marx, *Wage Labour and Capital*, Moscow, 1976, p. 28.

of ownership of the means of production). If, on the other hand, the means of production are the property of a group of people who make their living by exploiting the working people, then the goods produced belong to the exploiters and the distribution of goods takes the form which suits the exploiters' interests.

The relations that are formed in the process of the exchange of various activities among members of society are also production relations. Such, in particular, are money and commodity-money relations.

Depending on whether the means of production are public or private property, relations of either co-operation and mutual assistance, or of domination and subordination are established. Besides these two basic types of production relations, in some stages of historical development certain transitional production relations appear, which are based simultaneously both on private and public property, and include elements of co-operation and mutual assistance, on the one hand, and of domination and subjugation, on the other.

There are three types of production relations which typify domination and subordination and which correspond to the three forms of private property–slave-owning, feudal and capitalist–that appear and become dominant in definite periods of society's development. These are slave-owning, feudal and capitalist production relations. Slave-owning production relations presuppose that all the means of production are the private property of a definite group of people (the

slave-owners), while the slaves who put these means of labour into operation and carry out production in the interests of the proprietor, are deprived of them. Feudal production relations are based on the feudal lord's ownership of the land and other means of labour, as well as on partial ownership of the worker (who has his own means of labour and a plot of land at his disposal), whom the feudal lord can compel to work for him or can sell but whom he no longer has the right to kill, as was the case in slave-owning society. Capitalist production relations are associated with individual ownership of the means of production and the "free" hire of a formally (*de jure*) free worker, deprived of any means of production and, consequently, of any means of subsistence, who is compelled to sell his labour power to the owner of the means of production (the capitalist).

Production relations that imply co-operation and mutual assistance exist in two forms: primitive-communal and socialist. The first type was brought into being by a low level of development of the means of labour, which precluded the possibility of doing work alone, while the latter is associated with highly developed forces of production requiring social ownership of the means of production in order to function normally and develop unimpeded.

Transitional production relations were also of two types: one assumed the form of a transition from public to private property, while the second of a transition from private to socialist property. The first type was characteristic of the

period of decay of the primitive-communal system and the ensuing emergence of a class society. An example is patriarchal slavery, when some families, who were breaking loose from the community, began to employ, in addition to the labour of the family members, the labour of slaves who were the lowest on the social scale both in the family and in the community. The second type of transitional production relations emerges when capitalist production relations are being transformed into socialist relations. For example, there are various forms of semi-socialist co-operation, based simultaneously on private and social ownership of the means of production, as well as various forms of state capitalism.

Since production relations are the social form in which production functions and develops they neither exist in isolation from the productive forces, nor outside and independently of the means of labour and the people who put these means into operation. The productive forces and production relations are two different, though organically linked aspects of production, together constituting a mode of production of material goods.

A mode of production is nothing other than a pattern of people's activity which, while transforming various natural substances into the means of subsistence, in effect, reproduces man's physical existence. But the influence of a pattern of activity on people's life is not confined to this. It determines their way of life. Marx and Engels pointed out that "as individuals express their life,

so they are".[1] What individuals are depends on what and how they produce.

A mode of production of material goods is the basis of all social life, since it determines the structure of the social organism, and the social, political and spiritual processes of life, as well as social and state relationships. Society's division into classes, the relations among classes, the form of the family, the morals predominant in society, the legal relations and the religious and aesthetic views of people, etc.—all depend on the mode of production. Whenever the mode of production changes, changes also ensue in all social relations and the structure of the whole social organism.

Changes in the mode of production begin with changes in the productive forces of society. "In acquiring new productive forces men change their mode of production; and in changing their mode of production, in changing the way of earning their living, they change all their social relations."[2]

4. Dialectics of the Development of Productive Forces and Relations of Production

a) The Dependence of Production Relations on the Level of Development of the Productive Forces

The productive forces constitute the content of production, while the relations of production are its

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 31.

[2] K. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, Moscow, 1962, p. 105.

social form. Since the productive forces are the content of production, they are in constant, continuous movement, in a state of change and development. This is because production, while being the basis and condition of human society's existence, functions uninterruptedly. People cannot survive without consuming the material goods created in the process of production. To replenish the consumed means of subsistence, new ones must constantly be created. Since, moreover, the population grows from generation to generation, so do its requirements. Social production should not, therefore, simply reproduce the consumed means of subsistence, but rather create greater quantities of them.

The necessity of extended reproduction of the means of subsistence compels society constantly to improve its productive forces.

The development of the productive forces occurs during the production process. By influencing nature with the means of labour, people accumulate production experience, develop working skills and acquire a knowledge of the phenomena they encounter. On this basis, they constantly introduce relevant changes into the means of labour, i.e. improve them and create new ones. The application of these new means of labour enriches the available production experience and helps to develop new methods for performing certain operations, thus raising the productivity of labour. This, in turn, brings about a further improvement in the means of labour, and so on and so forth. In the course of this continuous improvement in

the means of labour, in people's production experience and their work skills, the productive forces grow and develop, thus paving the way for historical progress.

When the productive forces reach a definite level of development, they bring about a change in production relations. The replacement of one form of production relations with another signifies a transition to a higher stage of historical progress, to a new socio-economic formation. Thus, the slave-owning system replaced the primitive-communal, feudalism replaced slavery, capitalism replaced feudal relations, and socialism replaces capitalist production relations.

Each new generation inherits the productive forces created by its ancestors, utilises the achievements of practice and knowledge, and then develops them still further, thus creating a new link in the chain of historical progress. While inheriting the productive forces from the previous generation, each new generation is compelled to adapt to the conditions of labour that took shape on the basis of these productive forces and enter into relations within the bounds of which the given production relations are functioning. For this is the only way in which it can ensure both the further development of production and, at the same time, social progress. By further developing the productive forces inherited from the previous generation, each new generation realises, in effect, the opportunities offered by the level of development of practice and knowledge, and fosters those trends that are inevitably brought into existence

by this level. This means that society's development and historical progress are realised objectively, irrespective of people's will and wish, though they are the result of their creative activity.

"Men," Marx wrote, "are not free to choose *their productive forces*–which are the basis of all their history–for every productive force is an acquired force, the product of former activity. The productive forces are therefore the result of practically applied human energy; but this energy is itself conditioned by the circumstances in which men find themselves, by the productive forces already acquired, by the social form which exists before they exist, which they do not create, which is the product of the preceding generation. Because of the simple fact that every succeeding generation finds itself in possession of the productive forces acquired by the previous generation, and that they serve it as the raw material for new production, a coherence arises in human history, a history of humanity takes shape.... Hence it necessarily follows that the social history of men is always the history of their individual development, whether they are conscious of it or not. Their material relations are the basis of all their relations. These material relations are only the necessary forms in which their material and individual activity is realised."[1]

While being a form of men's productive activi-

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1975, pp. 30-31.

ty, production relations depend on the productive forces and change in keeping with the latter. The dependence of production relations on the productive forces finds its expression in the law of the correspondence of production relations to the level of development of the productive forces.

b) The Law of the Correspondence of Production Relations to the Level of Development of the Productive Forces

The essence of this law is that definite productive forces require strictly specific production relations corresponding to their level of development, and that changes in the productive forces ultimately bring about relevant changes in production relations.

The correspondence of production relations to the productive forces is an essential condition for the functioning and development of social production.

We have noted previously that all specific production relations took shape on the basis of a strictly definite level of development of the productive forces and under its direct influence. This being the case, how is it that production relations may sometimes not correspond to the productive forces?

Since the productive forces, which represent the content of production, are in a state of constant change, and production relations, being a social form of production, represent a relatively stable system of men's interrelationships, within the bounds of which both the exchange of substances between society and nature and the exchange of

activity among people (who form society) occur, then at a definite stage of development of the productive forces a disparity inevitably emerges between them and production relations, which lag behind in their development. Though production relations were the form of and condition for the development of the productive forces in the first stage, when they corresponded to the latter, in the second stage, when a discrepancy emerges between production relations and the productive forces and these two come into conflict, production relations become a brake on the development of production.

In the course of the further development of production, this contradiction is exacerbated and becomes a conflict determining the historical necessity of replacing obsolete forms of production relations and men's activity with new ones corresponding to the level of development of the productive forces.

The types of production relations that gradually replace each other "form in the whole evolution of history a coherent series of forms of intercourse, the coherence of which consists in this: in the place of an earlier form of intercourse, which has become a fetter, a new one is put, corresponding to the more developed productive forces and, hence, to the advanced mode of the self-activity of individuals—a form which in its turn becomes a fetter and is then replaced by another".[1]

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, p. 90.

The dialectics of the transition from correspondence of production relations to the productive forces to a disparity between them in the course of historical development which is accompanied by the production relations turning from a form of development of the productive forces into a brake on development, can be easily traced by reviewing the history of human society. Let us discuss briefly the replacement, in the process of historical development, of one form of production relations by another.

It the initial stages of human society's formation, when the productive forces excluded any possibility for men of fighting nature alone, people obtained their means of subsistence through collective efforts. Collective labour determined common ownership of the means of production, as well as the relations of co-operation and mutual assistance among people.

The primitive means of labour typical of primitive society gradually improved and developed: metal instruments of labour replaced primitive stone ones. An opportunity arose for the means of labour to be applied on an individual basis and for the private production of material goods to be organised. Since private production was conducive to a greater social division of labour and specialisation of production, which, in turn, brought about higher labour productivity and further improvements in the instruments of production, it appeared at that stage to be more useful than production in common. Communal ownership of the means of production and

equal distribution did not offer an opportunity for displaying one's initiative and deprived the worker of personal interest in raising the productivity of labour and in further developing the productive forces. There arose the historical necessity of replacing common ownership of the means of production, which no longer corresponded to the given level of development of the productive forces, with private property which, under the given circumstances, better suited the level of development of the productive forces. "Every change in the social order, every revolution in property relations, has been the necessary result of the creation of new productive forces which would no longer conform to the old property relations. Private property itself arose in this way."[1] Thus, with the appearance of private property, slavery came into being and slave-owning production relations set in.

For some period of time slave-owning production relations were the dominant form in which the productive forces functioned and developed. Later on, however, they came into conflict with the productive forces and became fetters on their further development. The point is that the slave, who was considered property, i.e. was in the complete possession of the slave-owner, who could kill him without being punished, was not at all interested in his labour, in raising its productivity or improving the instruments of labour. Mo-

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 348.

reover, brutally and inhumanly exploited, he hated his work for the benefit of the slave-owner and deliberately damaged the instruments of labour given to him. This forced the slave-owners to give to the slaves only instruments of labour that they could not damage. All this held back improvements in the instruments of labour and checked the growth of labour productivity. Hence, slave-owning production relations came into conflict with the further development of the productive forces and were replaced by more developed production relations–feudal production relations.

The latter did create a certain material interest in work on the part of the worker–the serf. The direct producer possessed a plot of land, as well as certain instruments of labour necessary for production, along with some free time which the serf could use working for himself (over and above the time he worked for the landlord).

The further development of feudal society's productive forces gave rise to the capitalist manufacture and other enterprises, based on hired labour. Compared to the serf, the wage worker was more interested in raising labour productivity, since the payment he received for his work was now dependent on the quantity of output he produced or on the time spent. All this encouraged the development of the productive forces and, in particular, of the instruments of labour, which were continuously improved. First simple machines and then more complicated ones appeared. Their application and development brought about

a revolution in the productivity of labour, which made a big leap forward.

Developing production based on hired labour, i.e. capitalist production, required free and more or less cultivated workers, capable of mastering complex technological processes and able to operate machinery. The labour force, however, was in the feudal lords' hands. The peasants were attached to the feudal lords' land and had no civil rights. Moreover, feudal relations held back the freedom of trade, which was part and parcel of the emerging capitalist productive forces. All this testified to the fact that feudal production relations had become a hindrance to the development of the productive forces, and so they gave way to capitalist production relations.

The development of capitalist production was accompanied by the constant introduction of new, improved and increasingly complex machines, and by the further social division of labour, which conditioned the growing socialisation of production. Individual industries entered among themselves into essential, increasing contacts and interdependence, thus forming an organic whole in which each element required smooth functioning and development of all other components in order to operate normally itself. As a result, the social product appeared as the outcome of the activities of a huge number of people engaged in different industries, and thus became more and more social in nature. But in so far as the means of labour remained the property of individual capitalists, the production and distribution of output

was suited to their interests. This is how the contradiction between the social character of production and the private capitalist form of appropriation emerged and developed.

The aggravation of this contradiction brings about periodically recurrent economic crises of overproduction accompanied by the destruction of the productive forces and means of subsistence created, chronic undercapacity of production, mass unemployment, and so forth. All this shows that capitalist production relations have come into conflict with the level of development attained by the productive forces and have begun acting as a brake on their further development. The historic necessity arises of replacing capitalist production relations with new, socialist relations, based on social ownership of the means of production, and presupposing the social form of distribution of the material goods produced. While corresponding to the modern level of development of the productive forces, socialist production relations create unlimited possibilities for the growth of production.

This is a concrete manifestation of the law of the correspondence of production relations to the level of development of the productive forces in society's historical development.

c) The Influence of Production Relations on the Development of the Productive Forces

It follows from the above that production relations depend on the productive forces.

While changing under the influence of the productive forces, which have gone ahead in their development, production relations do not remain passive, but respond actively and influence the productive forces that have brought them into existence. This influence reveals itself, above all, in the fact that production relations provide an impetus for the development of production and society's productive forces. For example, in slave-owning society the stimuli for the development of production were satisfaction of the slave-owners' needs and creation of the material wealth they required to lead their idle lives. As for the slaves, the dominating production relations provided no stimulus and no interest for them to develop production.

Feudal production relations, though no different from slavery as regards the stimuli for production development typical of the ruling exploiter class (since the feudal lords also wanted a life of leisure), nevertheless advanced one step by creating a stimulus for the exploited class, the peasantry, to work. The latter acquired a certain interest in developing production and the productive forces, but only when they worked on their own plot of land for their own benefit. While working off the quit-rent or corvée (that is when working for the feudal lords or the landowner), the peasant was not interested in raising labour productivity.

Capitalist production relations created a new and more powerful stimulus for production development, both among the exploiters and the exploit-

ed. The major goal of capitalist production is the appropriation by the bourgeoisie of an increasingly large quantity of the surplus product. Hence the unrestrained desire to accumulate wealth and expand production–a feature which did not exist in either feudal or slave-owning society. The major goal of feudal lords and slave-owners was to consume the product. It was no accident that in feudal and slave-owning society the rate of extended reproduction was rather insignificant.

The worker is more interested in raising the productivity of labour than the serf was. The worker's labour for his own benefit cannot be separated from his work for the capitalist's benefit in time or in space, since every hour and every minute of his work brings benefit both to himself and to the capitalist. So when working on piece rate, the worker is interested in raising labour productivity. The degree of this interest is probably not high, since the worker realises that he is working for the capitalist's benefit and enriching him.

It is only socialist production relations that create, for the first time, an overall interest on the part of the working people in developing production. Under socialism, the workers are aware that they are working entirely for their own benefit and for their society. This fosters a desire among them tc raise labour productivity, improve technology, and develop production. It is no accident that production grows in the socialist countries at a higher rate than in the capitalist world.

To sum up, the influence of production relations on the development of the productive forces finds its expression in the fact that production relations create stimuli for the development of production.

Chapter XI

THE BASIS AND SUPERSTRUCTURE

As already shown, production relations exert a reverse effect on the productive forces. This chapter deals with the influence of production relations on the other aspects of social life, and their place, role and importance in society.

1. Specific Features of the Basis and Superstructure

While determined by the productive forces, production relations themselves produce a determining impact on all other aspects of society. Political, juridical, ethic, aesthetic, religious and other views, as well as corresponding institutions, arise and develop on their basis and under their influence. In the light of this, *production relations are considered the economic basis of society, while the views and the corresponding institutions determined by them are considered society's superstructure.*

The relations of production and exchange, "the economic structure of society," as Engels wrote, "always furnishes the real basis, starting from

which we can alone work out the ultimate explanation of the whole superstructure of juridical and political institutions as well as of the religious, philosophical, and other ideas of a given historical period".[1]

The basis consists not only of the production relations that are dominant in the given period, but also of a mass of other production relations, in particular those left as survivals of the old mode of production, as well as those associated with the new economic structures developing within the given social system.

Though the basis represents the sum-total of all the production relations at a given stage of society's development, it is nevertheless connected with the dominating mode of production. The production relations conditioned by the dominant mode of production determine the nature of the economic basis and its essence, as well as that of the entire socio-economic formation.

The most important feature of the economic basis is the fact that its essence is represented by the material relations that take shape irrespective of men's conscience, in contrast to superstructural relations, which are ideological and originate in the human mind, and hence depend on people's will.

The basis relations are general for the given society, since all its citizens become involved in them. Indeed, by living in society every person in one way or another receives a definite portion

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 37.

of the means of subsistence, and thus participates in the distribution of the material benefits produced in the society. Distribution is, of course, one element of the production relations. Besides, from the moment of his birth every person belongs to some social group or class, and thus becomes involved in definite relationships with other social groups or classes.

In an antagonistic society the basis has a class character. Since the basis is the sum-total of all production relations based on private ownership of the means of production and on the principle of domination and subjugation, it ensures that one group of people appropriates the labour done by the other, and that some classes exploit others. This, in particular, distinguishes production relations from the productive forces. The productive forces are above class, since they serve both the old and the new classes equally, both bourgeois and socialist society. "The machine," Marx wrote, "is no more an economic category than the ox which draws the plough.... But the way in which machinery is utilised is totally distinct from the machinery itself. Powder is powder whether used to wound a man or to dress his wounds."[1]

Being determined by the level of development of the productive forces, the basis represents a kind of intermediate link between the productive forces and the superstructure. Neither the productive forces nor changes in them have a direct

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 33.

influence on the superstructure or the political, juridical and other social ideas and corresponding institutions; this influence is indirect, through the basis. Hence, with the same level of development of the productive forces, different and sometimes even diametrically opposite superstructures may exist, for the productive forces that are equal in terms of their level of development may exist for a certain period of time in quite different social forms, and under different and sometimes even opposite production relations. For example, the productive forces in the Soviet Union and those in the USA are developed to approximately the same level, though in the USSR there are socialist production relations, while capitalist production relations reign in the United States. There is a corresponding socialist superstructure in the Soviet Union and a capitalist one in the United States.

Consequently, the superstructure cannot be explained by the state of the productive forces. If, on the other hand, the economic basis, the sum-total of the production relations within which the current state of the productive forces is realised, is taken as the ground cause, superstructural phenomena can be correctly explained.

The above features of production relations indicate their dominating role in the entire system of social linkages and relations.

Having clarified the specific features of the economic basis, it is not difficult to determine those of the superstructure. The superstructure arising through definite production relations, i.e. the

basis, and representing the sum-total of the political, juridical, moral, aesthetic, religious and other ideas current in society, and the corresponding institutions, is not passive towards the basis which gave birth to it, but exerts an active influence on it.

"Political, juridical, philosophical, religious, literary, artistic, etc., development is based on economic development," Engels wrote. "But all these react upon one another and also upon the economic basis. It is not that the economic situation is *cause, solely active,* while everything else is only passive effect. There is, rather, interaction on the basis of economic necessity, which *ultimately* always asserts itself."[1]

Since the superstructure is the sum-total of all ideas and corresponding institutions arising on the given basis, i.e. it incorporates the ideas and institutions of both the ruling and the oppressed classes, its influence upon the basis is not uniform, and may take not one but different and sometimes diametrically opposite directions. Indeed, the views and corresponding institutions of the ruling class, i.e. the class which dominates the given mode of production, are aimed at substantiating, consolidating and defending this basis. On the other hand, the ideas and corresponding institutions of the exploited class are aimed at undermining and demolishing the given economic structure of society and replacing it with a

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works,* Vol. 3, p. 502.

new and more progressive system, as well as theoretically substantiating such a change. So in a class society the superstructure has a class character and becomes a battleground for a fierce class struggle reflecting the opposite economic interests that is determined and consolidated by the antagonistic basis.

Though the superstructure of antagonistic society does contain the ideas and corresponding institutions of both the ruling and oppressed classes, it is nevertheless only the ideas and institutions of the ruling class that play the leading part in it. So while referring to the role of the superstructure in any antagonistic society we must bear in mind these ideas and institutions of the ruling class.

In society the main role of the superstructure is to safeguard and consolidate the dominating basis, the dominating economic relations.

2. The Patterns of Development and Replacement of the Basis and Superstructure

The development of the productive forces inevitably leads to a change in the old production relations, the formation of new ones and to a change in society's economic system. "The changes in the economic foundation lead sooner or later to the transformation of the whole immense superstructure."[1]

[1] K. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Moscow, 1971, p. 21.

A change in the superstructure does not, however, immediately follow a change in the basis, in the society's economy. Changes take place in the basis prior to changes in the superstructure. The new mode of production that represents an antagonistic system of a higher order takes shape within the old basis. Once it has emerged, it is compelled to exist for some time under the domination of the old superstructure with which it conflicts. The aggravation of this contradiction usually gives rise to a clash between the classes that defend the old superstructure and those that represent the new basis, i.e. to a revolution, in the course of which the old superstructure is destroyed and a new one, corresponding to the new socio-economic system, is established.

Thus, for example, the new, capitalist mode of production began to take shape spontaneously at some point within feudal society and then spread to one economic sphere after another. The development of capitalist production was soon opposed by the old feudal superstructure, which came into conflct with the new basis that was taking shape. As the bourgeoisie gradually acquired a dominant position in the economy, it naturally sought to gain a corresponding status in politics, to take control of the organs of power and use them to clear the way for their economic activities. New political, juridical, moral, philosophical and other theories emerged which criticised the morals and institutions of feudal society. The bourgeois ideologists put forward the principles of national sovereignty, equality of all before the law, the

abolition of privileges for the nobility, and so forth. Eventually the old, feudal superstructure was demolished and the new, bourgeois superstructure established as a result of a bourgeois revolution.

Not all the component elements of a superstructure and not all its aspects undergo changes in the reconstruction of the old superstructure. Much of what was formerly the content of the old superstructure remains and develops further within the new superstructure. This is due, above all, to the fact that, in its development, the superstructure is subject not only to the requirements of the basis, but to its intrinsic laws. The basis determines the direction of changes in the superstructure. Though developing under the persistent influence of the basis, the superstructure uses the available material, which ensures continuity in this field.

Any thinker has at his disposal the material "which has formed itself independently out of the thought of previous generations and has gone through its own independent course of development in the brains of these successive generations".[1]

Continuity in the development of the superstructure may also be traced to the continuity in the development of the successive bases. For example, continuity of private property and the ensuing exploitation of the working people may

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works,* Vol. 3, p. 496.

be traced in the development of the antagonistic production relations. Both these factors remain when the transition is made from one antagonistic basis to another. Only the form changes. This inevitably ensures continuity in the political, juridical and other institutions and in the ideology. So, when it takes power, each new exploiting class improves and adapts the state apparatus to its needs, rather than destroy it. Religion, as a rule, is not discarded, since in all exploiters' societies it serves the ruling class and helps it keep the oppressed classes under control.

3. Specific Features of the Basis and Superstructure Under Socialism

The socialist basis differs radically from the previous, antagonistic bases. In contrast to the antagonistic bases, which reposed on private ownership of the means of production and the exploitation of man by man, the socialist basis reposes on social ownership of the means of production, which excludes appropriation of the labour of another.

The specific features of the socialist basis inevitably condition the qualitative difference of the socialist superstructure from those of the exploiter formations. The socialist superstructure expresses and safeguards not the exploiters' interests but those of all the working people.

The socialist basis, which is diametrically opposite in nature to the previous antagonistic bases, cannot arise within the old, capitalist so-

ciety. It only begins to form during a socialist revolution that wrests power from the exploiting class and transforms private ownership of the means of production into social property. During the transition from the capitalist to the socialist system, a socialist transformation of the basis does not, therefore, precede a political revolution but rather, on the contrary, the latter must precede the economy's transformation. The proletariat should begin to transform society once it gains political power and then proceed, in the course of the revolution, using this power for the economic transformation of society's basis.

On what, however, does the political power of the proletariat, gained through revolution, rest during the period preceding the creation of the socialist basis? It rests on socialist production relations, which are formed immediately after the seizure of power, as well as on the process of destroying and transforming the old basis. After the working class has seized power, it immediately starts transforming private capitalist enterprises into socialist ones and thus gradually deprives the bourgeoisie of its economic basis. No revolutionary workers' government is able to stay in power for long if it does not immediately decide to start the socialist transformation of industry. This means that the dictatorship of the proletariat may only be established once capitalist production relations have been destroyed and the socialist basis created.

Another specific feature of the socialist superstructure is that the old state apparatus, the chief

element of the superstructure, is not merely improved, as was the case when previous economic formations emerged, but is completely destroyed and replaced by a new, proletarian state apparatus, designed not to oppress the working people but to safeguard and satisfy to the maximum the latter's interests and re-educate them in the socialist spirit.

The role of the socialist superstructure is not confined to its participation in transforming the capitalist basis into a socialist one. In contrast to the superstructure of capitalist society, whose involvement in the economic sphere is strictly limited, the socialist superstructure actively intervenes in all the areas of the society's economy. Socialist ownership of the means of production makes the socialist superstructure, through the socialist state, the main distributor of the means of production and the nation-wide manager of production processes. This means that, apart from its political functions, the socialist superstructure performs administrative and economic functions as well.

Chapter XII

CLASSES AND CLASS RELATIONS

As was shown in the previous chapter, historical progress is achieved on the basis of the development of the productive forces, which bring about corresponding changes in production relations and a transition from one mode of production to another.

At a certain stage in the development of the productive forces society becomes divided into antagonistic classes–definite social groups of people with opposite economic interests. This is how the exploiter class and the class of the exploited comes into being. The slave-owners and the slaves were the first classes. Class relations, being in effect production relations, began to exert the decisive influence on all aspects of human life and on all social phenomena.

From this moment in society's historical development, not a single social phenomenon or change can be comprehended out of the context of classes, and the interrelations and struggle between them. The class approach is therefore the fundamental methodological principle of any social study in historical materialism, and an essential condition for probing into any social event.

The problem of classes and class relations had attracted the attention of bourgeois scholars long before Marx's time, and they came up with quite a few rational ideas. In particular, it was the classics of English political economy (Adam Smith and David Ricardo) who described capitalist society's class structure. The French historians of the Restoration (Thierry, Guizot and Mignet) proved that the class struggle is the reason behind changes in society's political system, etc.

The pre-Marxist sociologists failed, however, to create a scientific theory of classes and class struggle. Since they were ideologists of the exploiting classes and idealists in their comprehension of the life of society, as a rule they did not associate the existence of classes with a specific level of development of material production, and failed to detect in the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie the seeds of the inevitable collapse of capitalist society and its replacement by the new, socialist society. Neither did they believe in the disappearance of classes and the emergence of a classless society. These questions were first scientifically dealt with by Marx and Engels, who discovered and scientifically substantiated the law-governed patterns of the emergence, development and disappearance of classes, and revealed the determining role of the class struggle in society's transition from one socio-economic formation to the next, and eventually to the classless communist society.

"And now as to myself, no credit is due to me for discovering the existence of classes in modern

society or the struggle between them. Long before me bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this class struggle and bourgeois economists the economic anatomy of the classes. What I did that was new was to prove: 1) that the *existence of classes* is only bound up with *particular historical phases in the development of production,* 2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to *the dictatorship of the proletariat,* 3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the *abolition of all classes* and to a *classless society...*"[1] wrote Marx to Weydemeyer on March 5, 1852.

1. Lenin's Definition of Classes

Lenin gave the classical definition of classes. "Classes," he wrote, "are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organisation of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy."[2]

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence,* p. 64.

[2] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 29, p. 421.

The fundamental trait of classes, specified by Lenin, is people's relation to the means of production; the other features are determined by it.

In fact, people's place in the system of social production hinges on whether or not they are owners of the means of production. If they own the means of production, then it is their requirements that determine the objective of production, its size and the direction of development. If, on the other hand, they are deprived of the means of production, then they represent just a productive force, utilised by the owners of the means of labour for their own purposes. People's role in the organisation of labour also depends on this: those who own the means of production are the masters and organisers of production, and, *vice versa,* those who are deprived of the means of production execute the will of others and play a subordinate role.

The dependence of the form of appropriation and quantity of the material wealth produced on people's relation to the means of production is no less evident. The owners of the means of production hold the lion's share of the social wealth and give only a tiny portion of the goods produced to the direct producers–the working people.

The possibility for one part of society to live at the expense of the other's labour, is also conditioned by the relation to the means of production. By appropriating the means of production without which it is impossible to transform natural objects and phenomena into means of sub-

sistence, a specific group of individuals acquires the possibility of using these means to exploit those who have been deprived of them and become economically dependent on the former.

This definition of classes applies primarily to the classes of antagonistic formations, but this does not mean that it cannot be the basis for analysis of classes in socialist society. On the contrary, this definition helps us better to understand the qualitative changes through which the classes in socialist society have passed on their way to extinction as classes. The classes of socialist society—the working class and the collective-farm peasantry—do not posses some of the qualities specified by Lenin in his definition of classes. In particular, the classes of socialist society do not differ from each other by their relation to the means of production, since they both own them. The only difference is that the working class is related to state property or the property of the whole people, while the collective-farm peasantry—to collective or group property in the means of production. However, both types of property are socialist. The working class and the collective-farm peasantry do not substantially differ from each other in the role they play in organising social production. In socialist society production is managed by representatives of both classes. Finally, the classes of socialist society do not greatly differ in either the amount of, or ways of acquiring, social wealth. The two classes receive their wages in amounts determined by the quality and quantity of social labour expend-

ed. This shows that classes in a socialist society are not antagonistic. While having common interests in the vital issues of life and a common goal–the building of communist society–they maintain relations of comradely co-operation and mutual assistance. As they progress towards communism, the differences between them will be gradually eradicated till they vanish entirely.

2. The Origin of Classes

a) A Critique of Idealistic Theories

The problem of the origin of classes is of great theoretical and practical importance. In the absence of a correct solution to it, no scientifically-based theory of the law-governed pattern of class relations or the development of the class struggle can be created, the conditions under which classes disappear cannot be defined and, moreover, no transition to a classless communist society can be achieved.

Many theories exist on the origin of classes. Some authors hold that class distinctions among people are a result of biological factors and are, in particular, determined by race. Fascist ideologists advocated this theory. Its proponents apply biological laws to social phenomena, while the latter are subject in their development not to the biological laws of matter's motion, but rather to the laws of social life. The historical and practical experience of building socialism and communism in different countries shows that it is social

factors that govern the relations among classes, and not racial or national distinctions.

Another view is that the division of people into classes is due to the appearance of multiple professions and trades in society. All people belonging to the same profession, the supporters of this theory assert, form a definite class. Professional distinctions cannot, of course, serve as a basis for dividing people into classes. People belong to different classes not because they practise different trades, but rather the other way round–they practise different trades because they belong to different classes.

Some sociologists base their theories on the form of income people receive. They hold that class distinctions appeared among people when they began appropriating the surplus product in different forms. Those who received their income in the form of profit made up the capitalist class, those who received it in the form of rent, made up the class of landowners, and those who received it in the form of wages became workers, and so on.

This so-called theory of distribution mistook the effect for the cause, and hence distorted the actual state of affairs. In fact, the form of distribution of the material wealth produced is in no way determining; on the contrary, it is totally dependent on the mode of production and the form of ownership of the means of production.[1]

Along with these theories of the origin of clas-

[1] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 264.

ses, one of the most widespread is the force theory, in accordance with which classes were formed by one people subjugating another. The conquerors, so the theory runs, seized the property of the conquered by force and started exploiting them. That was the theory propagated by E. Dühring.

The theory of force does not stand up to scientific scrutiny. Sheer force cannot create classes. What the exploiting classes need for their existence are material goods which, since they are not absolutely essential for the survival of their direct producers, can be systematically appropriated by the exploiters. Force cannot create these goods. It can only seize them once they have been produced. In other words, violence "may be able to change the possession of, but cannot create, private property as such".[1] The appearance of classes is not brought about by violence, but by the economic causes determining the creation of additional means of subsistence not essential for the direct producer, and the possibility of their appropriation by certain individuals and social groups.

b) The Marxist Theory of the Origin of Classes

Marxism was the first theory to reveal the interconnection between the development of production and society's class structure. This interconnection consists, above all, in the fact that a

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 195.

definite level of development of labour productivity is essential before there is a real opportunity for man to exploit man. For, indeed, when man produces only the minimum of products required to maintain his physical existence and reproduction, any systematic appropriation of someone else's labour is out of the question. The opportunity to appropriate someone else's labour appears only when productive forces have developed to the level at which the quantity of goods produced somewhat exceeds the minimum required to maintain the direct producer's life.

The social division of labour has played a great role in the appearance of classes. The first major social division of labour was, of course, the separation of stock-raising tribes. This resulted in a higher labour productivity and in the production of certain new products. These tribes began producing not only meat and dairy products, but also hides, wool, goat hair and, at the same time, yarn and fabrics. This made it possible, for the first time, to start a regular exchange with other, notably farming, tribes. The new opportunity to exchange certain products for others encouraged the development of farming and the handicrafts. The latter still further increased the amount of labour expended by every member of the clan. The need arose for more labour power. War offered a solution: prisoners of war were turned into slaves.

In the initial stages, slave labour was still used sporadically, since the slave was utilised as a helping hand. He worked together with the other free members of the clan and his way of life dif-

fered little from theirs. As production developed further, however, particularly when the second major social division of labour occurred, i.e. when handicrafts became separated from farming, and later on with the appearance of mental and manual labour, the slaves ceased to be mere assistants. They were driven in dozens to work in the fields or workshops. Since they began to perform all major labour operations associated with the production of material goods, they were looked upon as objects or speaking implements, and no longer as members of the clan. Slavery became the basic form of economy." The *division of labour*," Marx wrote, "implies the possibility, nay the fact that intellectual and material activity–enjoyment and labour, production and consumption–devolve on different individuals. . ."[1]

The developing productive forces gave people an opportunity to work in separate families, in isolation from the others. Collective labour began to give way to individual labour. With the changes in the nature of labour, the ways in which the output was distributed also underwent changes. Whereas previously the output had belonged to the community, it now remained under the control of the heads of the family and became their property. In this way private property, which better corresponded to the requirements of production, replaced the spontaneously formed primitive-communal property.

According to Engels, the property distinctions

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, p. 44.

between individual members of society undermined the old communist commune. The tribal system had had its day and was replaced by a society based on private property and exploitation of one party of society by another, of one class by another.

3. A Critique of the Theory of Stratification and Social Mobility

Lenin's definition of the classes is constantly attacked by modern bourgeois sociologists, who endeavour to prove that both the definition and the Marxist theory of the classes in general are obsolete and that some other characteristics rather than people's social relation to the means of production, should be used to group them in social divisions.

Bourgeois sociologists propose quite different criteria, such as the line of business, place of residence, educational standard, having a house telephone, means of transport, outward appearance, etc. for substantiating the division of people into social groups.

Some authors take several traits, which they arrange as an "index", as the criterion of belonging to one or another social group. Thus, for example, in the opinion of the American sociologist Lloyd Warner an "index" of the class or stratum is made up of such traits as the occupation, sources of income, place and type of residence. Other authors list cultural standard, participation in social life, religious denomination, moral virtues

and even pronunciation among the attributes typifying a stratum. The majority of these attributes are not associated with any class distinctions, but may be typical of people belonging to quite different classes. For instance, neither occupation and source of income, nor the cultural level can characterise the essence of social classes or indicate their place in society, or their historical role, though they may identify a person as belonging to a certain class. None of them in isolation or jointly can, however, characterise the essence of social classes.

It is easy to see that, while proposing diverse criteria for dividing people into social groups, bourgeois sociologists turn a blind eye to the attributes that really do determine society's class structure. This is how they try to conceal the class contradictions in capitalist society and reduce them to petty professional and commonplace distinctions among people, thus distracting the working people's attention from the causes of their being exploited by the owners of the means of production.

The theory of "social mobility", widely publicised by bourgeois sociologists, serves the same ends. "Social mobility" means the opportunity for some individuals and groups of people to move from one social status to another. Two types of mobility–horizontal and vertical–are distinguished. The first is associated with changes in people's social status within the same social stratum, and the second with the individual's movement up or down the "social ladder". The

worker's changing a job in one plant for the same job in another is an example of horizontal mobility, while the promotion of a worker to an engineer or an office employee to manager are examples of vertical mobility.

According to bourgeois sociologists, social mobility, particularly vertical mobility, makes the class structure of society flexible and mobile, thus precluding the class struggle. The latter, they claim, is becoming superfluous since every individual dissatisfied with his social status may change it and move to a higher social category. In contemporary Britain, writes Lord Beaverbrook, for example, "no bar now prevents poverty rising to the heights of wealth and power".[1] "In an open society," says Joyce Hertzler, "the position of the members of a given stratum or class may be moved up or down during their own lifetimes by their achievement of class role essentials or lack of them. Such a system does not place categorical limitations on the person with respect to his class position. Vertical mobility is not merely permissive; it is a right, and may be quite general."[2]

It is true that the individual in capitalist society does have the formal right to move from one class to another, from one social group to another, since there is no law to stop him. In reality, however, the worker cannot become a capitalist

[1] Lord William Beaverbrook, *Don't Trust to Luck*, London, 1953, p. 18.

[2] Joyce O. Hertzler, *Society in Action. A Study of Basic Social Processes*, New York, 1954, p. 238.

(no matter how hard he works and what he may achieve), since the wage he gets is nothing but the value of his labour power sold to the capitalist. No matter how the wage may vary in amount, it is always supposed to reproduce this power and can never turn into capital.

The rare instances when individual proletarians do become bourgeois occur not as a consequence of tendencies typical of the social status of the working class, or as a consequence of objective laws governing the functioning and development of capitalist society, but due to some exceptional circumstances. The social status of the working class and the laws of the capitalist mode of production determine the continuous and extended reproduction of the proletariat, and, at the same time, the aggravation of its contradictions with the bourgeoisie, expressed in the intensification of the class struggle.

4. Society's Class Structure

a) Basic and Non-Basic Classes

Those classes that are engendered by society's dominant mode of production are its basic classes. Thus, the slave-owning mode of production conditioned the existence of slaves and slave-owners, the feudal one that of peasants and landlords, and the capitalist system that of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The relations between the basic classes determine the essence of the society's socio-economic system and the forms of

exploitation. When a society makes the transition from one formation to another, relations between the basic classes undergo radical changes. For the slave-owning system the typical relation between the basic classes was that the exploited (the slaves) were the property of the exploiters (the slave-owners). In feudal society, the landlord was no longer the peasants' owner, but "was only entitled to their labour, to the obligatory performance of certain services"[1]. With the transition to capitalism, non-economic coercion in relations between the classes had finally gone for good. The worker is legally free and independent of the capitalist, but having been deprived of the means of production he sells the capitalist his labour power and in this way becomes dependent on him.

There are no more than two basic classes in any class society, but there are, besides, other non-basic classes. Their existence is determined by different socio-economic structures existing along with the dominant mode of production. For example, in slave-owning society, along with production based on slave labour, there were also handicrafts and small-scale farming. This gave rise to the non-basic classes of artisans and free peasants. Similarly, artisans, the emerging bourgeoisie and the proletariat associated with it, existed alongside the landlords and serfs under feudalism, and a class of petty urban and rural bourgeoisie exists along with the bourgeoisie and the proletariat under capitalism.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 476.

b) The Intelligentsia

In capitalist society, besides the basic and non-basic classes, there is another social stratum—the intelligentsia. *Intellectuals, who are neither owners of the means of production nor direct producers of material goods, make up the intelligentsia,* which includes researchers, engineers, writers, teachers, doctors, artists and some sections of white-collar workers.

In capitalist society intellectuals and professionals come from various classes. Some of them serve capital by servicing capitalist production, and by elaborating and propagating the ideology which suits the bourgeoisie's intersts. The other part of the intelligentsia in capitalist society throw in their lot with the working people: voice the latter's interests and fight against the existing social system.

In socialist society the social nature of the intelligentsia changes. The overwhelming majority of the intellectuals take the side of the working class and join in building the new society. With society's progress towards socialism, the ranks of the intelligentisia are replenished by representatives of the toiling classes, who help establish increasingly stronger links between the intelligentsia and the people, and centre the interests of the intelligentsia on building communist society.

c) The Estates

Estates are social groups whose position in society is defined by a law specifying the rights and responsiblities of each of these groups. Since

estates are a form of class distinction, they presuppose the division of society into classes. In a society with several estates, the classes are related, as a rule, to different estates: the upper estates constitute the exploiting classes, while the lower estates make up the class of the exploited. At definite stages of historical development, however, a certain discrepancy emerges between class and estate divisions. For example, the bourgeoisie, which was quickly growing rich when feudalism was decaying, was a class of exploiters, yet it was not part of the upper estate. A division of society into estates was typical of the slave-owning and feudal socio-economic formations.

Each estate has strictly defined rights and responsibilities, laid down and safeguarded by the state power. Thus, in tsarist Russia the nobility, considered as a "genteel" estate, was relieved of taxes and corporal punishment, and had the right to possess land and serfs, etc. The clergy also had special privileges: for instance, it was exempt from state duties and taxes.

In contrast to the so-called upper estates, the lower estates (artisans, traders, peasants) had no privileges, but many duties. In particular, they paid various taxes and performed corvées. The right to belong to a particular estate was inherited.

Society's division into estates disappears as it makes the transition to capitalism, since all citizens are then equal before the law. In fact, however, different classes occupy different positions

in society. Some of them (the bourgeoisie) hold power and use it to their own ends, while others (the proletariat and the peasantry) are deprived, as a rule, of the opportunity to express their will in the form of a law and are subjected to constant oppression on the part of the exploiting class and its state.

d) The So-Called "Middle Classes"

While analysing the class structure of antagonistic society, the classics of Marxism-Leninism developed the notion of the middle classes, by which they meant the classes that hold an intermediate position between the basic classes. In feudal society it was the bourgeoisie that held an intermediate position between the feudal lords (or the aristocracy) and the working people. In bourgeois society, the middle class is represented by the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie, which is somewhere between the proletariat and the big capitalists. This class is made up of peasants, artisans and small traders. It is a specific feature of the middle classes that they lack a stable position in society and vacillate between the basic classes, alternately taking different sides.

Describing the class of petty artisans and traders, Engels wrote, among other things: "Its intermediate position between the class of larger capitalists, traders and manufacturers, the bourgeoisie, properly so called, and the proletarian or industrial class, determines its character. Aspiring to the position of the first, the least adverse turn

of fortune hurls the individuals of this class down into the ranks of the second.... Thus, eternally tossed about between the hope of entering the ranks of the wealthier class, and the fear of being reduced to the state of proletarians or even paupers; between the hope of promoting their interests by conquering a share in the direction of public affairs, and the dread of rousing, by ill-timed opposition, the ire of a Government which disposes of their very existence, because it has the power of removing their best customers; possessed of small means, the insecurity of the possession of which is in the inverse ratio of the amount; this class is extremely vacillating in its views."[1]

In recent years the problem of the middle classes has attracted the attention of bourgeois sociologists, who saw it as a factor supposedly refuting the Marxist-Leninist thesis of the class struggle and the revolution.

By arbitrarily interpreting the concept "middle class", bourgeois sociologists are trying to prove that capitalists and proletarians disappear in modern capitalist society, and that both these classes turn into one "middle class" which becomes the decisive force of modern society. Accordingly, they claim, capitalist society is changing into a society of the "middle class" with no class struggle and no dictatorship of the proletariat. "The history of industrialised societies," writes Jessie

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 304.

Bernard, "does seem to be in the direction of a 'classless' society, but not by way of the route predicted by Marx.... The 'classless' society, then, is coming not through a transitional dictatorship of a proletariat, but by the enormous expansion of the middle class which tends to absorb those below it."[1]

To define the middle class, bourgeois sociologists take various points of departure rather than the place people occupy in the system of social production or their relation to the means of production. The annual family income is often given as a criterion for placing people in the middle-class category. Moreover, the brackets of this income are so vaguely defined that both the capitalist and the worker may be included within the same middle class. Thus, for example, the US Department of the Treasury places all families with an annual income of between $3,200 and $100,000 in the middle class. As a result, this class covers, on the one hand, artisans, shopkeepers, white-collar office and commercial workers, wealthy farmers, skilled workers and, on the other, corporation executives, businessmen, landowners and other representatives of the big and middle bourgeoisie.

A similar situation results when some other factor of the same kind is taken as the criterion

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[1] Jessie Bernard, "Class Organisation in an Era of Abundance: A New Principle of Class Organisation". In: *Transactions of the Third World Congress of Sociology*, Vol. III, *Changes in Class Structure*, London, 1956, pp. 26-27.

of the middle class. Some scholars, for instance, define the middle class on the basis of occupation, including in it technicians, shop assistants, teachers and small businessmen.

All these notions obviously have very little to do with science. The antithesis between the exploiters and the exploited, between the owners of the means of production and the people deprived of them, does not disappear, regardless of whether or not the businessmen who earn their living by exploiting the working people, and the workers who are exploited by capital, are included in one class. This being so, the talk about the disappearance of antagonistic classes under capitalism as they merge into a "middle class" is but another attempt at concealing the exploitative essence of capitalism and distracting the workers' attention from the revolutionary struggle for changing the existing state of affairs.

5. The Class Struggle as a Motive Force in the Development of Antagonistic Society

Since different classes occupy different economic positions in society and live under dissimilar conditions, their interests cannot be the same. For example, the bourgeoisie has a vested interest in cutting the workers' wages, as this would bring them bigger profits, while the workers want quite the opposite; during general elections to legislative organs, both the capitalists and the proletariat are anxious to get their own representatives elected; the bourgeoisie is inter-

ested in consolidating private property, since it is the economic basis for its domination, while the proletariat wants private property to be abolished; the bourgeoisie does its best to perpetuate the exploitation of man by man, while the proletariat is anxious to abolish it and create conditions precluding the possibility of anyone making a living at the expense of other people's labour, etc.

Pursuing opposite interests, the antagonistic classes wage a continuous, never ending, struggle which at a definite stage results in the restructuring of the entire social organism and society's transition from one stage of its development to the next. "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles."[1]

In the first place, the class struggle affects the development of the productive forces. In particular, it speeds up the improvement of the means of labour. For instance, the workers' struggle for shorter working hours compelled the capitalists to introduce improved technology enabling them to produce a larger surplus value. Marx emphasised that the workers' strikes in many instances gave an impetus to the design and introduction of new machines.

The influence of the class struggle on the development of the productive forces can also be traced, in a somewhat different form, in other socio-economic formations. In feudal society, in

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[1] K. Marx and Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, Moscow, 1975 p. 482.

particular, the class struggle of serfs promoted the replacement of corvée by a quit-rent, and later on a transition from the quit-rent in kind to a quit-rent in cash.

Apart from influencing the development of the productive forces, the class struggle also affects that of production relations. Obsolete production relations are not automatically changed under the impact of the productive forces that have developed within their framework, for the historically doomed but still ruling class, which is bent on staving off impending changes, supports the old production relations. So a force powerful enough to overcome this resistance is required. It is the activities of progressive classes, aimed at changing the existing state of affairs, reflected in the class struggle, that represent this force.

Only the struggle of society's progressive forces against the historically outdated ruling class can culminate in the establishment of new production relations corresponding to the level of development attained by the productive forces. This is why the class struggle is a motive force for progress in antagonistic society.

The class struggle has a long history. Its forms, aims and nature have changed from one period of history to another. Thus, in slave-owning society, for instance, the class struggle of the exploited against the exploiters was not spearheaded against the existing mode of production. By fighting the slave-owners, the slaves tried to liberate themselves from slavery, rather than to abolish it altogether. Even so, their uprisings un-

dermined the slave-owning social system and finally compelled the slave-owners to bind the slaves to the land and undertake certain other measures facilitating the economic transformation of the slave-owning system and its replacement by feudalism.

In feudal society the exploited peasants started to connect their struggle with changes in social relations, in particular, serfdom, private property in land, and so on.

While fighting oppression, the peasants usually became politically dominated by the bourgeoisie and obeyed it. The scope of the peasants' struggle was, therefore, usually limited by the interests of the bourgeoisie. Even so, the peasants' struggle against exploitation played a positive role, since it promoted the abolition of feudal production relations and brought nearer the victory of the capitalist mode of production.

Although they fought exploitation and oppression, the working masses of feudal society could not achieve this goal, for they themselves were property-owners and could not objectively oppose private property. They opposed feudal ownership of the means of production but supported capitalist property and capitalist production relations. As a result their struggle led in practice to the replacement of one form of exploitation by another.

The situation changed radically when the industrial proletariat became an independent political force. It is the proletariat's economic position that impels it to press consistently for the abolition of private property and exploitation

of man by man. In the very course of the development of capitalist production, the proletarians unite, become organised and turn into a migthy force confronting the exploiters.

The proletariat started its class struggle with spontaneous attacks by isolated groups of the working class against individual capitalists who were the most notorious oppressors of workers. This struggle centred strictly on economic issues and was directed against intolerable exploitation and oppression, the causes of which were initially seen in some individual capitalists' brutality and lack of human feeling.

Economic struggle is the first historical form of the proletariat's class struggle. It grows spontaneously out of the economic plight of the working class and is waged mainly for improvements in the terms for selling labour power, rather than for the complete abolition of such conditions. The importance of the economic struggle is, however, great, since it gave rise to the first class organs of the proletariat–the trade unions.

Later on the working class becomes convinced that the economic struggle can neither radically improve its position nor abolish exploitation. It begins to realise the relation between the bourgeoisie's economic domination and state power, as well as the fact that the latter safeguards the exploitative system. As soin as the working class realises that both its economic and political interests are diametrically opposed to those of the bourgeoisie, the proletariat's class struggle becomes conscious and purposeful.

Socialist ideology and its alliance with the workers' movement has a great role to play in developing the class struggle from a spontaneous, economic movement into a conscious and political one. The communist party performs the task of disseminating the socialist ideology in the working-class movement. It is Communists who wage the ideological struggle against bourgeois and petty-bourgeois views. While expressing the fundamental interests of the working class, the communist party theoretically substantiates the goals of the proletariat's struggle and defines the ways and means of attaining them.

The class struggle of the proletariat thus develops in three directions: economic, political and ideological, with the political struggle playing the decisive role, since only political domination of the working class can ensure a radical transformation of the economy and the building of the classless communist society.

A major feature of the proletariat's class struggle against the bourgeoisie today is the fact that it is intensifying. This is associated with the aggravation of all social conflicts in the epoch of imperialism and with the emergence and successful development of the socialist world system which graphically demonstrates the ways for abolishing the exploitation of man by man.

Another important feature of the present-day struggle of the proletariat is the stronger link between the economic and political struggle. Workers' strikes increasingly acquire a political nature and are accompanied by political de-

mands and all kinds of political demonstrations.

In view of the growing heterogeneity of the working class (under the conditions of monopoly rule its ranks are rapidly being replenished by members of the petty bourgeoisie who have failed to withstand competition) and the systematic corruption by the bourgeoisie of the upper strata of workers (the so-called workers' aristocracy), the working class movement is lacking in unity. Some of its sections follow Communists, while the others support opportunists who, in effect, voice the interests of the bourgeoisie. One of the most important tasks of the present-day revolutionary working-class movement is thus the struggle for unity of action.

Another specific feature of the class struggle of the proletariat in modern conditions is its close alliance with various democratic movements fighting against monopoly domination and for peace, national independence and sovereignty. Though the participants in these movements do not pursue the aim of transforming the capitalist system into a socialist one, their struggle, nevertheless, greatly contributes to the proletariat's struggle for socialism. "General democratic struggles against the monopolies," says the Programme of the CPSU, "do not delay the socialist revolution but bring it nearer. *The struggle for democracy is a component of the struggle for socialism*".[1]

Speaking of the connection between the class struggle of the proletariat and the present-day

[1] *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, 1962, p. 484.

democratic movements, we must take into account that today these movements have somewhat different goals than in the pre-monopoly period of capitalism. Whereas in the past they were mainly directed against the vestiges of feudalism, today these movements in the industrialised capitalist countries are directed against the domination of the monopolies that express, in the most concentrated form, the essence of modern capitalism. In the industrialised capitalist countries the present-day democratic movements are therefore linked in one way or another with the struggle against capitalism, against some of its most reactionary aspects. As for the developing countries, the democratic movements there are still spearheaded against feudalism, which hampers their progress, and against the foreign capital that has taken root in these countries and is doing its utmost to retain its position. In these countries, too, there is a possibility of setting up an alliance of the working class led by the communist party with the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the revolutionary-minded national bourgeoisie–an alliance which would form a basis for the transition to socialism by-passing the capitalist system.

6. The Objective Conditions for the Abolition of Classes

Many bourgeois sociologists claim that, in modern capitalist society, classes and class distinctions have disappeared, and that, nowadays, one

should talk not of class distinctions, but of distinctions between people. They assert that social differences are gradually disappearing and only individual distinctions remain. In particular, they draw this conclusion by alleging that, since many workers have bought shares, they have become co-owners of industrial enterprises with the result that the workers' interests completely coincide with those of the capitalists, while capitalism itself has become people's capitalism.

The hard facts show, however, that capitalism has always been and still is anti-popular, and that the interests of the monopolies and of the working masses can never coincide, because they are diametrically opposite. The fact that some workers buy shares does not change the overall picture. According to statistics, some 98 to 99 per cent of all workers have no shares at all, while even those who have a few shares, are naturally in no position to exert any influence on the company's affairs. The ones who control the means of production and the output are the capitalists who own the bulk of shares.

There is no doubt that in the industrialised capitalist countries the objective conditions are ripe for the abolition of antagonistic classes, but they cannot wither away under capitalism, where private ownership of the means of production holds sway.

What are the conditions necessary for classes to disappeear and what form should this process take?

Society will be divided into classes as long as social labour yields output that barely exceeds

the most basic means of subsistence and until this labour consumes all, or almost all, the time of the bulk of the members of society. Besides the nation's majority, totally occupied with the production of material values, there emerges a class which is free from direct productive labour and is engaged in politics, law, science, arts, and the like.

With the attainment of a higher level of development of the productive forces, when they can produce sufficient material goods to meet the requirements of all members of society, the existence of classes is no longer a necessity, since it not only discourages social progress, but even retards it. Under such conditions, the division of people into classes can be eliminated. The abolition of classes "presupposes, therefore, the development of production carried out to a degree at which appropriation of the means of production and of the products, and, with this, of political domination, of the monopoly of culture, and of intellectual leadership by a particular class of society, has become not only superfluous but economically, politically, intellectually, a hindrance to development. This point is now reached."[1]

Thus, one of the conditions for the disappearance of classes is a high level of development of the productive forces, but one such condition is not enough in itself. The existence of classes is associated not only with a definite level of de-

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 148.

velopment of the productive force, but also with definite production relations determined by this level, in particular with production relations based on the private ownership of the means of production. In order to do away with antagonistic classes, private property must be abolished. "The abolition of classes," Lenin wrote, "means placing *all* citizens on an *equal* footing with regard to the *means of production* belonging to society as a whole. It means giving all citizens *equal* opportunities of working on the publicly-owned means of production, on the publicly-owned land, at the publicly-owned factories, and so forth."[1]

Certain other conditions are also required for the complete abolition of classes. Quite substantial differences took shape, accumulated and consolidated on the basis of the economic and political distinctions between classes over many centuries. They concern, in particular, differences in education, morals, aesthetics, and so forth. It is the triumph of communism that is needed for these differences to be wiped out. To sum up, the abolition of classes is linked with socialist revolution and the building of communist society.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 146.

Chapter XIII

THE POLITICAL ORGANISATION OF SOCIETY

1. The Political Organisation of Society as a Concept

With the division of society into classes and the establishment of the domination of one class, a special mechanism arises by which the ruling classes govern society and regulate the relations between classes, between separate individuals, between the individual and society, and between the country and other countries.

This mechanism includes the state with its ramified network of institutions and organisations, political parties, trade unions, various youth societies, and other unions and associations.

The state represents the pivot of the political organisation of society. It is the main instrument by which the ruling class implements its policies and regulates class relations in society, and society's relations with other countries.

2. The Origin and Essence of the State: A Critique of Non-Marxist Theories

The question of the essence of the state is a complex one, and has been the centre of a fierce ideological struggle. This is because it affects the interests of classes more than any other.

To give a clearer picture of the confusion of views on the state, we shall briefly discuss some pertinent bourgeois theories or, rather, viewpoints.

The neo-Thomists, for example, advocate the so-called theological theory of the state, the main provisions of which were formulated by the 13th-century scholastic Thomas Aquinas. According to this theory, the state is of divine origin. Since the state represents the Deity on Earth, they claim, it stands above social classes, uniting them into a single whole and administering its powers over this entirety, sanctioned by the Lord. Since state power originates in God, assert the advocates of this theory, it must be revered.

The reactionary nature of this theory is evident. Its exponents are trying to make the working people believe that a bourgeois state is non-class, that it expresses and protects the interests of all members of society, and that, taking account of its divine origin, it should therefore be treated with special respect, and all its demands obediently fulfilled.

The supporters of another–the patriarchal–theory allege that the state emerged as a result of the development of the family, which first turned into a clan, then into a tribe, and later into a state. State power, they claim, is thus none other than the transformed power of fathers, since the father, of course, treats all members of the family in an equal manner.

In Lenin's words, the patriarchal theory of the origin and essence of the state is "childish non-

sense".[1] It is patently contrary to the actual state of affairs. The family is not at all the original unit of human society, but appeared at a later stage in society's development. Originally people lived in clans and even tribes, and it was much later that families separated off from these as a result of economic development and, in particular, of the invention of instruments of labour making it possible to work alone. The state is based not on blood relationships between people, but on the territorial principle. All the people who live on the territory of the state, irrespective of the place of their birth, are considered its citizens.

The theory according to which the state arose as a result of a social compact concluded by people in the remote past, is also rather popular. Its champions (Spinoza, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and others) claimed that the emergence of the state was conditioned by people's desire to prevent mutual hostilities and regulate existing relations. After setting up the state, people, acting in accordance with the compact, vested in it some of their rights and entrusted it to protect their freedom.

In the period of its rise (the 17th to 18th centuries), this theory played a progressive, role since it advocated the temporal origin of the state and acknowledged the right to change it if it ceased to perform its function of protecting the freedom of all citizens. On the whole, however, this theory is not scientific. Nobody concluded any compact to form a state. Though many supporters of this

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 154.

theory admitted that, in reality, there was no social compact and that the thesis was advanced only to explain theoretically the essence of state power and people's sovereignty. The compact itself could not serve as such a basis either, since it represented a phenomenon dependent on the consciousness of the people who concluded it. The reasons for the emergence of the state lie not in the realm of consciousness, but in the people's material condition which takes shape irrespective of their consciousness.

Many bourgeois sociologists trace the emergence of the state to force. According to them, the state arose as a result of the subjugation of one tribe or people by another. The conquerors seized the property of the subdued and began administering them with the help of an apparatus especially set up for the purpose. This is, for example, how one of the protagonists of the theory of force, Karl Kautsky, explains the rise of the state: "A victorious tribe subjugates the subdued tribe, appropriates all their land and then forces the subdued tribe to regularly work for the victor, to pay him tributes or taxes.... The repressive apparatus which the victors set up for the subdued, becomes the state."[1]

This theory of the origin of the state does not reveal what actually happens. Sheer violence cannot engender the state. In order for a special

[1] Karl Kautsky, *Die Materialistische Geschichtsauffassung*, Bd. 2, "Der Staat und die Entwicklung der Menschheit", Berlin, 1929, S. 82.

group of armed men, called upon systematically to suppress the population, to exist, there must be certain material goods supplied to them regularly. But violence alone cannot create them. There must be the necessary economic conditions, in particular the means of labour, making it possible to produce more means of subsistence than are required to sustain the physical existence of the producers. Force has nothing to do with the emergence of these conditions.

Some bourgeois sociologists attempt to relate the necessity for the emergence of the state with the psyche. They claim that, in psychological terms, people are divided into two directly opposite groups: strong-willed, active and energetic people, and weak-willed, passive people who are ill adjusted to life. The former are in need of people whom they can organise and force to act, while the latter desperately need leaders and mentors, without whom they can neither function nor survive. These two groups of people, according to the supporters of this theory, join ranks and form a state, in which the former take power and force the latter to perform definite functions.

This so-called psychological theory at present enjoys wide currency among some bourgeois sociologists who try to substantiate and justify the rule of capitalist tycoons. The ideologists of the imperialist bourgeoisie constantly emphasise that, without strong personalities to guide the state policy, organise and develop production, the nation could not survive and would starve to death due to lack of initiative, passiveness and helplessness.

History, however, refutes these conjectures. In socialist countries the rule of capitalist tycoons has been abolished, but the working people have achieved a level of production development over only a few decades that would have taken much more time for the capitalist countries to reach.

The psychological theory of the state is essentially idealistic, since it considers psychic factors to be the ultimate cause for the rise of the state, while these are, of course, neither determining in society as a whole nor in any individual's life.

Thus, there is one general shortcoming in the above theories of the origin of the state—they search for it not in the economic realm of the life of society but in the other world, or in subjective and psychic human acts.

It was historical materialism that, for the first time, provided a scientific explanation of the origin and essence of the state.

3. The Origin and Essence of the State

According to historical materialism, the state did not always exist, but emerged at a definite stage in the development of society or, to be more precise, when society was divided into exploiting and exploited classes. In primordial society, where collective labour, common ownership of the means of production and relations of co-operation and mutual assistance predominated, there were neither classes nor a state. Human relationships, labour duties and all other aspects of social life were regulated by customs and traditions, passed

down from one generation to another. Communal officials were elected and those who were chosen for public employment relied in their activities exclusively on the authority and respect they enjoyed among members of the commune or the clan.

When classes emerged the situation underwent considerable changes. Society began to disintegrate increasingly into groups with opposite interests, with one group beginning to make its living by appropriating the labour of the other. Society became threatened by a fierce and irreconcilable class struggle between the exploiters and the exploited. This meant that a certain apparatus of coercion was required systematically to crush the resistance of the exploited, and thus place the class struggle within certain bounds of the "order" needed for society to function and develop. The state was this apparatus which became separated from society and stood above it. The state became a machine protecting the order preferred by and advantageous to the class that dominated the economy. With its help, this class also became the politically dominant class and acquired a new means for the suppression and exploitation of the oppressed class.[1]

The state is thus an instrument in the hands of the ruling class for suppressing and oppressing the working people, the exploited masses.

The territorial principle of dividing up the population is one of the main features of the state.

[1] See K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 328.

In tribal society its members were united into a single whole by blood relationships. It was only after the appearance of private property and commodity exchange that clans and tribes intermingled, thus paving the way for the unification of people on the territorial, residential principle.

Another distinguishing feature of the state is the presence of public authority in society. In the case of tribal organisation of society, it was the people who had the authority. It was the people themselves who, for many centuries, maintained the established order, punished the guilty and forced them to observe the existing norms of behaviour. In the state, however, authority separates from the people, rises above them and becomes opposed to the population in the form of special groups of people with an armed force, prisons and other similar institutions at their disposal.

Finally, the state is characterised by the collection of taxes levied on the population. These represent the material base the state needs to maintain the people who exercise the power.

Since the exploiting state is, by nature, an instrument for oppressing and suppressing the exploited and for protecting relations between people, such as are to the liking and advantage of the exploiters, its main function is to stamp out resistance among the exploited. Its entire mechanism and all its organs are geared to check the actions of the exploited classes against the exploiters, either at the very outset or at the point where they become dangerous for the latter.

While oppressing the working people physically, the exploiting state also oppresses them morally. It has a ramified network of ideological institutions, including the church, to propagate ideas, views and moral principles expressing the interests of the ruling class. Besides, the state interferes in the economy whenever and as far as is advantageous to the ruling class, and influences the course of its development. This becomes especially pronounced in the period of imperialism, when the state interferes in economic matters in the interests of the big monopolies, whom it obediently serves.

The state also performs an external function, which is not the main one of its activities, but is still necessary in order for the ruling class's interests to be realised. It protects the country from encroachment on its sovereignty by other states, wages wars to seize new territory and spheres of influence, and pursues the interests of the ruling class in solving international political and economic issues.

The external function of the state is intimately linked with its internal functions, its purpose being to protect the interests of the ruling class both domestically and in relations with other countries.

4. Types and Forms of the State

Once the state had emerged, it did not remain unchanged, but evolved in step with the development of the productive forces and production re-

lations. In the course of history the state's structure and essence underwent considerable changes. Historical materialism takes these changes into account and distinguishes some types and forms of the state.

The type of the state is determined by which class holds power and which production relations the state protects and consolidates.

Historical materialism distinguishes three types of exploiting state and one type of socialist state. The types of exploiting state are: the slave-owning state which represents the dictatorship of the slave-owners designed to protect the slave-owners' private property and suppress the slaves; the feudal state which is an instrument of the feudal lords for suppressing the peasants; and the capitalist state which expresses the interests of the bourgeoisie, and suppresses the proletariat and other sections of the working people.

The form of the state indicates how the state power is exercised. By a form of the state we mean, first of all, the form of government. There are, thus, monarchies and republics, with a further subdivision into aristocratic and democratic republics.

"A monarchy," Lenin wrote, defining forms of the state, "is the power of a single person, a republic is the absence of any non-elected authority; an aristocracy is the power of a relatively small minority, a democracy is the power of the people (democracy in Greek literally means the power of the people)."[1]

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 479.

One and the same type of the state may exist in the most diverse forms. Thus, for example, the slave-owning state existed both in the form of a monarchy and in that of a republic. Moreover, it took the forms of both aristocratic and democratic republics. Republics and monarchies existed under feudalism and they still do under capitalism.

A form of the state is of particular importance for describing a certain state power, but it does not characterise the essence of the state. This is determined by the type of state, i.e. by which class's dictatorship is embodied in the state power. For example, in spite of differences in form, all slave-owning societies had the same essence. Their basic feature was that the slaves, far from being considered citizens, were not even treated as human beings. Roman Law treated them as objects and the law prescribing punishment for murder, to say nothing of the other laws protecting human dignity, did not apply to them. It protected only the slave-owners, since only they were recognised as full-fledged citizens.[1]

This pattern holds for both bourgeois and socialist societies. Despite a great variety of forms of bourgeois states, their essence is the same: they represent the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. As for the socialist state, a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, it may exist in the form of the Paris Commune, a republic of Soviets, or a people's democracy, etc.

[1] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, pp. 479-80.

The differentiation of types and forms of the state helps to assess any state correctly and expose its class nature.

5. Specific Features of the Socialist State

Every type of state is related to a definite socio-economic system and represents a definite stage in the development of society's political organisation. In the process of social development, the state machinery, while passing from the control of one exploiting class to another, remains a means of suppressing and oppressing the working people. This situation continued unchanged until the proletariat emerged–the class interested in the abolition of exploitation of man by man and, due to its economic position, capable of leading all the working people.

In contrast to the exploiting classes, the proletariat, once it has seized state power in the course of a socialist revolution, cannot accommodate and utilise the old state machinery for this was geared to suppressing the working people and protecting the exploiters' interests, whereas the task of the proletariat is to abolish exploitation and protect the interests of the working people. So the proletariat destroys the old state machinery and creates a new one which exercises its dictatorship and represents the interests of the working people.

The proletariat needs the state in order to solve the tasks involved in the transformation of capitalist into socialist society. These include suppressing the exploiters who, even after they are

overthrown, continue their struggle against the proletariat and the social transformations introduced by it; they have capital, are organised and possess knowledge and have long-established links with the international bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois elements at home.

So, while suppressing the bourgeoisie, the proletariat must unite all the working people and petty-bourgeois elements around itself, organise and draw them into the struggle for socialism, for the transformation of all social life along socialist lines, for the organisation of large-scale socialist production and for the establishment, on this basis, of conditions for the abolition of classes. "In order to achieve victory, in order to build and consolidate socialism, the proletariat must fulfill a twofold or dual task: first, it must, by its supreme heroism in the revolutionary struggle against capital, win over the entire mass of the working and exploited people; it must win them over, ogranise them and lead them in the struggle to overthrow the bourgeoisie and utterly suppress their resistance. Secondly, it must lead the whole mass of the working and exploited people, as well as all the petty-bourgeois groups, on to the road of new economic development, towards the creation of a new social bond, a new labour discipline, a new organisation of labour, which will combine the last word in science and capitalist technology with the mass association of class-conscious workers creating large-scale socialist industry."[1]

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 423.

Without the state, however, without establishing its dictatorship, the proletariat cannot resolve these tasks and cannot make a transition from capitalism to socialism. While emphasising the need for a dictatorship of the proletariat during that period, Marx pointed out that "between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the *revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*".[1]

The state of the dictatorship of the proletariat radically differs from exploiting states, which express the interests of the minority–the exploiters–and are used by them to suppress the majority–the working people. The proletarian state expresses the interests of all working people, i.e. of the overwhelming majority of the country's population, and is directed against the minority–the exploiters.

Furthermore, the exploiting state is an organ of coercion. The dictatorship of the proletariat is more an instrument of non-coercion than of coercion. It is an organisation through which the working class guides the peasantry and other working sections of society and encourages their voluntary transition to socialism. The dictatorship of the proletariat is thus directed against the exploiters and is a friend of the working people,

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 26.

in particular of the peasantry, and a helper in the struggle for liberation from exploitation and for higher living standards. "The workers' state," Lenin wrote, "is an implacable enemy of the landowner and capitalist" and "the only loyal friend and helper the working people and the peasantry have."[1]

Since the dictatorship of the proletariat differs radically in nature from any other dictatorship, it embodies a new and higher type of democracy. In contrast to bourgeois democracy, which, in all capitalist countries, is in fact a democracy for the exploiters, socialist democracy is for the working people, for the overwhelming majority of the nation. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat the emphasis is shifted from formal recognition of freedoms (as is the case in the capitalist world) to their practical exercise on the part of the working people.

It is only after the dictatorship of the proletariat is established that the freedom of the press proclaimed by bourgeois constitutions becomes a reality for the working people, because it means that newspapers, magazines, publishing houses and printing presses become state property, which is tantamount to their being in the control of the working people. The situation is quite different in the capitalist countries, where the press is controlled by capital. "The first thing to do to win real equality and genuine democracy for the working people, for the workers and peasants, is

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 29, p. 559.

to deprive capital of the possibility of hiring writers, buying up publishing houses and bribing newspapers,"[1] Lenin wrote.

As distinct from exploiting states, where the working masses are by all manner of means kept out of political life, the socialist state is based on increasingly broad participation of the masses in the administration of state affairs.

"We know... from long years of practice that ... genuine democracy is impossible without socialism, and that socialism is impossible without a steady development of democracy."[2]

A state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which arises as a result of a victorious socialist revolution with the aim of suppressing the exploiters and guiding the building of socialism, undergoes changes in the course of socialist transformations and, having fulfilled its historic mission, becomes a state of the whole people after the completion of the building of socialist society and its entry into the stage of building communism.

As distinct from the dictatorship of the proletariat, which retains the function of suppressing the overthrown exploiting classes, a state of the whole people does not practise class coercion any longer. With the victory of socialism, the exploiting classes are abolished and this removes the need to suppress them. The dictatorship of the proletariat expressed the interests of the working

[1] Ibid., Vol. 28, p. 461.

[2] L. I. Brezhnev, *Report of the CPSU Central Committee and the Immediate Tasks of the Party in Home and Foreign Policy. XXVth Congress of the CPSU*, p. 103.

class and the working masses, but the state of the whole people, the embodiment of the people's unity, reflects the interests of the entire society, which are determined by the supremacy of socialist ownership of the means of production and the single, socialist, mode of production.

Though the state of the whole people differs greatly from that of the dictatorship of the proletariat, they are closely interlinked and have much in common. The state of the whole people grows out of the dictatorship of the proletariat and develops on the basis of a consistent evolution of its principles. Yet those features that embody the essence of the state of the whole people–the expression and protection of the interests of the working people and their leadership in the building of a new, classless society–are also typical of the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat. With the gradual abolition of the exploiting classes and the conditions engendering the exploitation of man by man, the coercive and dictatorial functions of the proletarian state begin to wither away, while its functions associated with the expression and protection of public interests expand and become dominant. From an instrument of class domination, the state turns into an instrument of the public will.

With the development of the dictatorship of the proletariat into a state of the whole people, the leading role of the working class does not drsappear. In the period of the all-round building of communism and in the developed socialist society, the working class remains the most advanced, or-

ganised and conscious class and the most consistent bearer of communist ideals. It is linked with machine industry and with the form of socialist property that has the highest level of socialisation, so it retains its leading role until the building of communism is completed and class distinctions have been finally eradicated. At previous stages of development, the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, and the leading role of the working class in this alliance took the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The alliance of the working class and the peasantry is not, however, identical to the dictatorship of the proletariat and does not, by itself, constitute this dictatorship. It assumes the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat only in the period when the exploiters are being suppressed and when the life of society is being transformed along socialist lines. The alliance of the working class and the peasantry no longer, however, needs the dictatorship of the proletariat in the period of the complete and final victory of socialism, when the exploiting classes have been abolished and when a complete identity of the fundamental interests of the two classes and their social, political and ideological unity have been achieved. This alliance may successfully develop in a state of the whole people as well.

The transformation of the dictatorship of the proletariat into a state of the whole people leads not to the weakening of the socialist state, but to its consolidation, since nowadays it firmly rests on a more solid social base and on more power-

ful productive forces embodied in the complete sway of the socialist economy and the unity of the Soviet people.

While representing a new and higher stage of development of socialist society, the state of the whole people is not the terminal point of this development. As it advances further, it will gradually turn into public communist self-administration–a state-free organisation for running society's affairs–and then will wither away.

6. Objective Conditions for the Withering Away of the State

Some revisionists link the withering away of the state with the socialist phase in the development of society and with the victory of the socialist revolution. Socialism does not, however, create the objective conditions for the withering away of the state, since under socialism it is not yet possible to do without state interference in the life of society or without state coercion.

The necessity of state administration of society under socialism is determined, first of all, by economic factors and, in particular, by the insufficiently high level of production development, which presupposes state control over the measure of labour and consumption.

Without state administration, socialist society cannot solve the great tasks arising in the course of communist construction, requiring strict discipline, centralised planning and subordination to a single centre. Under socialism not all members

of society have acquired the habit of observing the established rules of behaviour of their own free will, so state power is required to safeguard these norms. Besides, the state must protect socialist gains against external enemies.

The state can wither away only under communism, and this calls for classes to be completely abolished and all class differences to be overcome. "The abrogation of the state," Marx and Engels wrote, "has only one meaning for Communists–it is the necessary outcome of the abolition of classes, which involves the natural disappearance of the need for the organisational power of one class to retain its domination over the other classes."[1]

It is the development of the production of material goods to help satisfy all people's requirements and realise the principle "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs", that is essential for the complete abolition of the state.

Finally, a major precondition for withering away of the state is the high cultural standards and consciousness of society's members, implying that work for society's benefit will become the prime necessity of every healthy person, that people would observe the rules of communal behaviour of their own free will and there would be no need for any coercion.

Besides these internal conditions for the abolition of the state, there are certain external ones:

[1] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 7, S. 888.

the elimination of capitalism in all countries and the triumph of socialism and communism on a world scale. Only then would the danger of military attack disappear, the danger that necessitates the maintenance of an army, state security organs and other state institutions related to the exercise of the external function.

The withering away of a socialist state will proceed gradually as the role of public bodies grows and the working people participate on an increasingly broad scale in administering society's affairs, as public control is extended and the functions of state organisations are taken over by public bodies. During this process, the socialist state is transformed into a non-state administrative organisation–into communist public self-administration.

Chapter XIV

SOCIAL REVOLUTION

1. Social Revolution as a Form of Transition From One Socio-Economic Class System to Another

A social revolution is an upheaval in the course of which a transition is effected from one historically outdated socio-economic formation to another, more progressive one.

A social revolution is not something accidental in social development; it is an inevitable consequence of the aggravation of the contradictions that developed within the dominant mode of production. A conflict between the new productive forces and obsolete production relations is resolved in the course of a revolution. Progressive forces seek to change the obsolete production relations, but the latter are the backbone of the domination of the reactionary class, which opposes any changes in these relations, relying, primarily, on the state power which has the means of suppression at its disposal. In order, therefore, to alter the obsolete production relations, power has to be wrested from the class related to these production relations, i.e. a revolution has to be carried out.

The passing of state power from one class to another is the principal, the basic sign of a revolution.[1] This is the feature by which a social revo-

[1] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 44.

lution differs from a putsch or coup d'etat which, without affecting the foundations of the domination of a particular class, just lead to a change in the government of the ruling class.

This is how Lenin defined the political aspect of a revolution: "The revolution itself is nothing but the break-up of old superstructures and the independent action of the various classes, each striving to erect the new superstructure in its own way."[1]

The revolutionary transformation does not, however, end with the take-over of power by the progressive class. A social revolution presupposes radical changes not only in politics, but also in all other realms of social life, in particular, in the economy, ideology, social psychology and so forth. The whole social organism and the entire system of social relations and institutions change and are renewed during a social revolution.

While emphasising the decisive role of a revolution in the transition from one socio-economic formation to another, historical materialism does not deny the existence of evolutionary processes in the social development, resulting in definite progressive changes within the same socio-economic formation. In contrast to the reformists, however, who consider evolution to be the basic form of social progress and the way of transition from one socio-economic formation to a more advanced one, historical materialism views the evolutionary form as a secondary one, capable of bring-

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p.218.

ing about certain qualitative changes within the same substance but unable to ensure transition to a new social system. It is a revolution that is required for a change-over from a historically outdated social system to another, more advanced one, since only revolution can effect a radical break-up of existing social forms and a transformation of the life of society. It is not by chance that Communists advocate revolution as a way of passing from capitalism to socialism. This, of course, does not mean that Communists are against evolutionary forms, in particular, reforms. They deny neither reforms nor the necessity of fighting for them.

2. The Objective and Subjective Preconditions for a Social Revolution

A conflict between the new productive forces and the obsolete production relations which have become an obstacle to further development of the productive forces and, at the same time, to social progress, is the economic basis of social revolution. It is this conflict that, in the final analysis, drives the progressive forces of society into a fight for the transformation of the social system and production relations which develops into a revolution at a definite stage. This conflict alone is not, however, sufficient for a revolution to be accomplished, since the contradiction between the productive forces and production relations does not automatically generate a revolution. For a social revolution to begin it

is necessary for this contradiction to create a revolutionary situation, which is an objective precondition for a social revolution.

Lenin considered the following factors as attributes of a revolutionary situation: (1) a state of affairs when not only the lower classes are unwilling to live in the old way, but also when the upper classes are unable to live as before; (2) a more than usually acute aggravation of the suffering and want of the oppressed classes; (3) a considerable increase in the activity of the masses who allowed themselves to be robbed in peacetime, but who resolutely voice their demands in turbulent times.[1]

The situation which developed in Russia prior to the Revolution of 1905 may serve as a case in point. A country-wide crisis preceded this revolution. The tsarist government was entangled in contradictions and proved incapable of solving the tasks necessitated by the development of capitalist relations in the country. It well realised, however, that the situation could no longer remain unchanged and that something had to be done. The lower classes, suffering from hardships, did not want to live in the old way either.

Thus, a revolutionary situation is needed for a revolution to occur, but this alone is not yet sufficient for a revolution to unfold, and not every revolutionary situation engenders a revolution. A revolution can only begin when, in addition, the

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[1] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, pp. 213-14.

objective preconditions listed above merge with a definite subjective factor, namely, the ability of a revolutionary *class* to undertake mass-scale and sufficiently *powerful* revolutionary actions, in order to crush (or undermine) the old government which would never, even during crises, "fall" without being "toppled", and the presence of a revolutionary political party, capable of taking the leadership over these actions.

Though a revolutionary situation develops spontaneously, it is always a result of the intensifying class struggle and an interplay of the various factors that come to the surface during a crisis in a given social formation.

3. The Character and Driving Forces of a Social Revolution

The character of a social revolution is determined by the concrete tasks it is called upon to resolve, and by the results achieved. If the revolution is supposed to replace feudal with capitalist production relations and ensure the sway of the bourgeoisie, it is a bourgeois revolution. If the main goal of the revolution is to abolish capitalist private property and transform the means of production into public socialist property, and if it is aimed at establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat and effecting a transition to socialism, then such a revolution is a socialist one.

The classes which carry out a social revolution are its driving forces. For example, in the revo-

lutions directed against the feudal social system, the bourgeoisie, the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie (artisans, small traders) and even the proletariat took part. All these classes, depending on the circumstances, may be the driving forces of a bourgeois revolution.

The active participation of the working classes in a bourgeois revolution, accompanied by the advancement of specific demands, leaves an imprint on the entire course of the revolution and turns these revolutions into popular or bourgeois-democratic ones, which are marked by a more determinate revolutionary action and greater consistency in implementing revolutionary transformations.

4. A Socialist Revolution

a) The Essence and Specific Features of a Socialist Revolution

A socialist revolution is a qualitative leap which results in the transition from the capitalist socio-economic formation to a socialist one.

The contradiction between the level of development of the productive forces achieved within the capitalist mode of production and the capitalist production relations that have become fetters on further progress in production, is the economic basis of a socialist revolution. This contradiction manifests itself in a growing discrepancy between private capitalist appropriation and the social character of production, which is a necessary

outcome of the application of machines and mechanisation of production processes. This discrepancy leads to recurrent economic crises, chronic underloading of production, a growing army of unemployed, wars for the redivision of the world and spheres of influence, seizure of new markets and sources of raw materials, etc.

All this intensifies the conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and encourages the rallying of all the working people and the exploited masses around the proletariat, which fights for society's transformation along socialist lines.

The proletariat and the non-proletarian working masses exploited by capital constitute the driving forces of the socialist revolution. It is the proletariat, however, that plays the leading role. It is the proletariat that is called upon to fulfil the historic mission of the grave-digger of the bourgeoisie, execute the verdict passed by history on capitalist private property, turn it into a public socialist property and, in this way, resolve capitalist society's contradiction between the productive forces and production relations. Since the proletariat is deprived of ownership of the means of production, and united and organised by the very conditions of its labour, it represents a consistent revolutionary class capable of carrying along the non-proletarian mass of the working people and the petty-bourgeois sections and leading them during the socialist revolution.

The goals of the socialist revolution–seizure of political power, establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and its utilisation to crush the

exploiters; replacement of capitalist small-commodity production relations with socialist ones and, at the same time, abolition of any grounds for exploitation of man by man; organisation of highly-mechanised large-scale socialist production capable of meeting the growing requirements of the working masses; a rise in the cultural level of the population and its increasingly broader involvement in the administration of the state and active participation in public affairs—all of which result in the building of a socialist society.

The socialist revolution radically differs from all previous social revolutions. Whereas all previous revolutions replaced one exploiting class at the helm of power with another, a socialist revolution establishes the domination of a class whose mission is to end the exploitation of man by man.

While opposing some specific form of private property, all previous revolutions established another such form. A socialist revolution sweeps away all private property and replaces it with public property.

In the course of previous social revolutions the classes that were coming to power sought to consolidate their acquired position by subjecting the entire society to conditions ensuring their own mode of appropriation and to the economic relations which had taken shape prior to the revolution. The proletariat, which comes to power as a result of the socialist revolution, gains control of the social productive forces only by changing its social position and ridding itself of the prevailing

mode of appropriation. "The proletarians have nothing of their own to secure and to fortify; their mission is to destroy all previous securities for, and insurances of, individual property".[1]

While consolidating and sanctifying the economic relations that have taken shape within the old social system, all previous revolutions confined themselves to destroying whatever prevented these relations from developing. A socialist revolution does not limit itself to the destruction of the old, historically outdated order; its mission is to create new forms of property and new production relations that could not arise within the old society based on private property.[2]

All previous revolutions, while expressing the interests of the exploiters, i.e. of the minority, were reduced to replacing the rule of one class by that of another and could not activate the working masses. The socialist revolution is carried out in the interests of the overwhelming majority and it therefore inspires wide sections of the population—the mass of the working and exploited people—to creative deeds.

Finally, while just changing the form of exploitation of the working people, all previous revolutions could not ensure a cohesive society, since after the revolution's victory the interests of the class that had come to power always conflicted with those of the overwhelming majority of the

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 118.

[2] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, pp. 416-18.

population. All this testified to the inevitability of new social conflicts and new social revolutions. A socialist revolution which sets itself the goal of abolishing all forms of the exploitation of man by man and any kind of oppression, can and does unite the overwhelming majority of the population–the working classes–among whom, in the course of the revolution, there develops an alliance based on common interests and a unity of objectives.

b) The Theory of Socialist Revolution as Developed by Lenin

The theory of socialist revolution was conceived by Marx and Engels. Lenin developed it further and applied it to the new historical conditions of the epoch of imperialism. He also advanced and substantiated the idea of a successful socialist revolution in one country, developed the theory concerning the growing of a bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist one, proved the necessity of an alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry during the socialist revolution, and discovered the Soviets as a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat resulting from the victorious revolution, and so forth.

Marx and Engels lived when capitalism was in its prime–it was vigorously spreading throughout the world. It was the bourgeoisie that led the bourgeois-democratic revolutions that were breaking out at that time. The peasantry and the proletariat acted as allies of the bourgeoisie. As a result

of these victorious revolutions, the bourgeoisie usually seized power, established its rule and could peacefully exploit the working people for a more or less prolonged period of time, until the corresponding objective and subjective preconditions emerged for a proletarian revolution. It is only natural that, under these conditions, Marx and Engels were unable to see that a bourgeois-democratic revolution might develop directly into a socialist one.

In Lenin's time, however, capitalism entered its highest and final stage. By that time the proletariat had firmly established and consolidated itself as a class and acquired a great deal of experience in class struggles, had set up its political party and proved itself as a force capable of decisive actions. On the other hand, the bourgeoisie had by that time lost its former revolutionary zeal. Now it considered not the feudal lords or monarchy but the proletariat its main enemy, and it was therefore ready to make any concessions to the feudal lords and the nobility, in order to prevent the bourgeois-democratic revolution from developing at full speed and carrying out the pertinent democratic reforms. Under these new conditions, the bourgeoisie proved to be less interested in breaking up the old feudal production relations than was the proletariat, who needed elementary democratic freedoms and guarantees to secure for itself freer and wider organisation in its struggle for socialism. The bourgeoisie could not, therefore, retain its hegemony in the bourgeois-democratic revolution, and

this role was taken over by the proletariat, which acquired a firm ally in the peasantry. Under these circumstances the state power must go over, as a result of the victorious bourgeois-democratic revolution, not to the bourgeoisie, but to the proletariat and the peasantry, who establish their dictatorship, later using it to crush counter-revolutionary resistance, completely abolish survivals of feudalism and establish the conditions under which the working people could widely enjoy democratic freedoms and, finally, considerably improve the material condition of the working class and all the working masses.

Having exposed the specific features of the bourgeois-democratic revolution under imperialism, Lenin developed the theory of the immediate development of the bourgeois-democratic into the socialist revolution.

According to this theory, while attaining the goals of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, embodying the power based on the alliance of these classes under the leadership of the proletariat, is utilised to prepare for the overthrow of capitalism and, in particular, for the concentration and rearrangement of forces, centering around the proletariat and capable of carrying out a transition to a socialist revolution.

Lenin's idea of the development of the bourgeois-democratic into socialist revolution was based on a profound understanding of the unity of democratic and socialist movements in the

epoch of imperialism. This unity gives rise to a situation when the growth of a democratic movement in all its forms encourages, to a certain degree, the expansion of the social base of the proletarian revolution, especially in those countries where feudal or semi-feudal relations still survive. Well-known popular fronts in some now socialist countries have become reflections of this new tendency. It was the communist parties that led the national liberation movement in these countries, ensured a smooth transition from the democratic to socialist transformations and then to the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

While working out the theory of the development of the bourgeois-democratic into socialist revolutions, Lenin gave all-round consideration to the issue of the proletariat's allies in the socialist revolution. The proletariat does not perform the socialist revolution alone. It has allies who participate in the socialist revolution. Among its allies are the non-proletarian working masses, the peasantry in the first place.

In the epoch of imperialism the peasants are turned increasingly into the slaves of capital. Capital penetrates all the spheres of agriculture, thus increasing the numbers of hired labourers, which, in turn, gives rise to the peasants' increasing dispossession of the land. As a result of this process, the working peasants become proletarians, taking an ever more hostile attitude towards the bourgeoisie. As a result, the non-proletarian working population may become a reliable ally of the pro-

letariat in its struggle for the victory of the socialist revolution.

Furthermore, Marx and Engels believed that the socialist revolution would simultaneously triumph in all or, at least, in the major capitalist countries, but it was Lenin who drew attention to the graphic manifestation of the law of the unevenness of economic and political development of the capitalist countries in the epoch of imperialism. The unevenness of the economic and political development is responsible for the fact that in different countries the conditions for the proletarian revolution mature unevenly. Hence the conclusion that revolution cannot simultaneously take place in these countries and that it can triumph in one or, at best, in several countries at once, these being the weakest links in the imperialist chain.

c) The Multiple Forms of the Socialist Revolution

The socialist revolution, being effected in different countries at different times and under different conditions, may take different forms. In particular, it may assume the form of an armed uprising or be carried out by peaceful means.

For example, in the Soviet Union, when the working class in alliance with the peasantry came out against the bourgeoisie, capitalism was dominant in all other major countries. Counting on the support of these countries, the Russian bourgeoisie did not intend to relinquish its power peacefully, so the socialist revolution in Russia took the form of an armed uprising, which later

developed into a civil war unleashed by the bourgeoisie. On the other hand, in other countries (in particular in Poland, Rumania, Hungary and some others), the socialist revolutions took place under different conditions, affected by the existence of the Soviet Union, and the socialist revolution developed from a democratic, anti-imperialist revolution, directed against nazi invaders, feudal lords and the monopoly bourgeoisie, and so socialist transformations proceeded peacefully.

The specific features of the socialist revolution in one or another country concern not only the way the power is taken, but also the multifarious transformations of the political, economic, ideological and other aspects of society's life. For example, after the revolution of 1917, the Russian bourgeoisie did not wish to co-operate with the workers and peasants, since it believed that their power would not last long, and so began its struggle against the working people's power, making every effort to overthrow it. As a consequence, the Soviet Government was compelled to isolate the bourgeoisie from participation in the country's economic and political life. It was disfranchised, while the means of production belonging to it were nationalised and turned into public property.

As distinct from the Soviet Union, in some other countries, such as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the transformation of enterprises belonging to the national bourgeoisie proceeded in a somewhat different way—not through nationalisation but through the establishment of mixed state-cap-

italist undertakings that were gradually transformed into socialist enterprises. These features stem from the fact that, for a long period of time, this and other such nations were semi-colonial, semi-feudal, economically backward countries with a relatively weakly developed national bourgeoisie who took part in the struggle against imperialism, monopolies and the feudal lords. Remaining economically and politically weak, and sensing the futility of opposing the socialist transformations of the economy, the national bourgeoisie in these countries chooses to co-operate with the power of the working people and not to struggle against the transformation of capitalist industry along socialist lines.

There are many specific features related to the transformation of agriculture and other areas of social life in various countries that affect the socialist revolution there.

While stressing the inevitability of differences in the way the socialist revolution develops in individual countries, Marxism-Leninism opposes the views of revisionists who absolutise these differences and peculiarities, and who claim that every country is heading towards socialism in a way drastically differing from those taken by other countries or from that once passed by the Soviet Union. It should be remembered that each specific feature is inevitably linked with that which is common, that each difference presupposes identity and that the general laws of transition from capitalism to socialism, which should be always borne in mind if the desired goal of so-

cialism and communism is to be reached along the shortest road, do inevitably make their way through the host of specific features of the socialist revolution in individual countries. Below are some of these general laws, formulated in the Declaration of the 1957 Meeting of Representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties: 1) guidance of the working masses by the working class, the core of which is the Marxist-Leninist party, in effecting a proletarian revolution and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat; 2) the alliance of the working class and the bulk of the peasantry and other sections of the working people; 3) the abolition of capitalist ownership and the establishment of public ownership of the basic means of production; 4) planned development of the national economy; 5) gradual socialist reconstruction of agriculture; 6) the carrying out of the socialist revolution in the sphere of ideology and culture and the creation of a numerous intelligentsia devoted to the working class, the working people and the cause of socialism; 7) the abolition of national oppression and the establishment of equality and fraternal friendship among peoples; 8) defence of the achievements of socialism against attacks by external and internal enemies; 9) solidarity of the working class of the country concerned with the working class of other countries, that is, proletarian internationalism.

Chapter XV

SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND ITS FORMS

1. The Essence of Social Being and Social Consciousness

Before applying to the life of society dialectical materialism's principle of the primacy of matter over consciousness we must distinguish between material and spiritual phenomena in society and determine the law-governed patterns of their interrelationship. Marxist sociology customarily uses the term "social being" to denote material phenomena in society and "social consciousness" to describe spiritual phenomena.

Social being includes the activity of people aimed at creating the objects and material goods that are essential for their life–food, clothing, housing, means of transport and so forth. This activity is performed with the utilisation of the means of labour created by society, acting upon nature with the aim of adapting it to society's needs. During this labour activity people establish certain relations between one another, on the one hand, and between themselves and nature, on the other. The relations between people and nature manifest themselves and are embodied in definite kinds of means of labour, while those between people themselves are expressed in the form of ownership of the means of production and in the

corresponding forms of distribution of the means of labour and the material goods produced.

Social being thus consists primarily of the relations among people which arise in the process of the production and distribution of material goods, i.e. production relations.

Even though people's production relations represent the major aspect of social being, the latter also includes certain other aspects, such as the material relations arising between spouses within the family, the relations between parents and children, as well as certain (material) cultural and every-day relations.

The totality of material relations within which the real process of human life proceeds, as well as that of the material conditions of human existence, constitute social being.

Whereas the concept "social being" is associated with the material life of people and the conditions for creating material goods, "social consciousness" is related to their spiritual life and the specific features of society's spiritual creativity.

Social consciousness is the totality of ideas, theories, views, outlooks, feelings, customs and traditions existing in society and reflecting the social being of people and the material conditions of their life.

Social consciousness reflects social being to the extent that consciousness generally reflects the reality existing outside and irrespective of the former. A concrete expression of the general philosophical principle that consciousness reflects

the reality existing outside and irrespective of it, this thesis, when applied to social consciousness, includes a number of specific features that make it an independent sociological principle related to a specific aspect of the interrelationship between consciousness and being. Indeed, applied to general philosophical (i.e. dialectical materialist) principles consciousness reflects reality as an image or copy of it, while in the sociological context (i.e. historical materialist), the consciousness (of society) reflects social being not by making copies of the latter and not in the form of images or pictures of its component parts, but rather in the form of dependence on it and the determining nature of the contents of social ideas, outlooks, feelings, strivings and other economic conditions of human life.

For example, the recognition of a marriage of convenience as being moral in capitalist society undoubtedly reflects the economic conditions and social being of the bourgeoisie, based on the domination of private capitalist property and commodity-money relations. But it is not an image of this being or this economic position; it is conditioned and brought to life by the latter. Or take another example: the teaching of the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle that some people, by their natural qualities, were destined to become slave-owners, while the others to be slaves, reflected the social being of the slave-owners and their striving to theoretically substantiate and justify the slave-owning mode of production. This teaching was not, however, an exact reproduction

of the actual situation and social being concerned though it was undoubtedly brought into existence by this social being.

We must not think that since social consciousness reflects social being in the form in which the content of the former is conditioned by the latter, this type of reflection cannot be a copy of social being and cannot assume the form of objective truth. Under definite historical conditions the content of social consciousness may represent objective truth. This may be so when verification of the actual situation corresponds to the interests of some ruling class, or when its interests conform to the requirements of the objective material development of society's life and to the trends of change in social being. For example, the social consciousness of the progressive classes who oppose historically obsolete forms of social being does, as a rule, contain the objective truth that to one or other degree reflects the actual situation. Thus, when the bourgeoisie was fighting feudalism, which had become historically obsolete and acted as a brake on the further progressive development of society, its social consciousness to some extent reflected the actual situation, i.e. it contained elements of the objective truth. Later on, when capitalist private property became an obstacle to the further development of the productive forces and when a historical need arose for replacing it with socialist property, the social consciousness of the bourgeoisie and, in particular, the theories produced by its sociologists, could no longer originate from the actual situation. On

the contrary, they sought to prove the continuous nature of capitalism and the necessity of its eternal existence and began, either intentionally or unintentionally, to distort its social consciousness.

Social theories and diverse sociological views do not become genuinely scientific and do not start to reflect the objective truth until the time when the capitalist socio-economic formation begins to decay and the proletariat, interested in knowing the actual laws of social development in order to fulfil its historical mission–the abolition of private property and of the exploitation of man by man, as well as the building of a classless communist society–comes on the historical scene.

The Marxist thesis of the decisive influence of social being on social consciousness helps to reveal the reflection of material contradictions, the class struggle, through the prism of ideological struggle. Indeed, whereas certain social ideas and theories arise as a reflection of social being and are determined by people's economic conditions, consciousness cannot be uniform and above classes in a class society. Each class forms its own consciousness and understanding of the surrounding world in conformity with the economic conditions of its being. In antagonistic society, the social being of different classes is not the same and may even be diametrically opposite. The antagonistic polarity of social being inevitably leads to antagonisms in the realm of consciousness and to clashes of diverse ideas and views. In order to keep one's bearings in social life and to be able

to sort out the diverse opinions, social ideas and theories, it is essential to bear in mind the class nature of social ideas and theories.

"People," Lenin wrote, "always have been the foolish victims of deception and self-deception in politics, and they always will be until they have learnt to seek out the *interests* of some class or other behind all moral, religious, political and social phrases, declarations and promises."[1]

It should be remembered that in society the ruling class seeks at any price to impose its views on the broad sections of the working people and to make these views dominant. It succeeds to one or another degree since it has the material means and controls the entire propaganda apparatus—the press, radio, cinema, theatre and so forth.

"The ideas of ruling classes," Marx and Engels wrote, "are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e., the class which is the ruling *material* force of society, is at the same time its ruling *intellectual* force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships..."[2]

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 28.

[2] K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, p. 61.

2. The Relative Independence of Social Consciousness

While stressing the dependence of social consciousness on social being, historical materialism certainly does not reject the relative independence of social consciousness and the existence of intrinsic laws governing its development.

Social being cannot explain the entire wealth of ideas and theories within a society. Entering each new stage of development, social consciousness takes with it certain ideas and theories from the previous stage. These become independent of the new developing social being and exist, as it were, on their own. For example, the emergence of socialist production in the Soviet Union radically changed the social being and social consciousness of the Soviet people. In Soviet society there are also, however, ideas dating to the remote past, which are not only out of keeping with socialist social being, but even contradict it. This applies in particular to religious ideas, which exist as vestiges of the past in the consciousness of certain individuals in Soviet society.

This, however, does not mean that certain aspects in social consciousness are absolutely independent of social being. The independence of social consciousness is always relative. Individual ideas and outlooks may be independent of only the currently dominant historical conditions and historical being, but not of the material conditions of life in general.

The relative independence of social consciousness is conditioned, first and foremost, by the fact

that ideas may survive the social being that directly engendered them, for social consciousness lags behind social being.

The relative independence of social consciousness is also the outcome of the interplay between the various forms of social consciousness which determines the presence of certain traits in a particular form of social consciousness and cannot be explained by the material conditions concerned. But even here the independence of the spiritual aspect of social life is only relative, for the interrelationship between different forms of social consciousness is also, in the final analysis, dependent on objective material factors.

3. The Influence of Social Consciousness on Social Being

While arising under the influence of people's definite social being and reflecting the material conditions of their life, social consciousness does not, however, behave passively. Social consciousness exerts a reverse influence on the social being that engendered it. This influence, too, depends on the character of social consciousness and on the nature of its component ideas, theories and outlooks. All ideas, different social theories and outlooks may be grouped according to their content into old reactionary and new progressive. The old ideas and theories reflect and express the interests of the obsolete classes and thus their influence on the life and development of society is negative. They hamper society's advance. On the

other hand, the new progressive ideas and theories reflect the interests of the progressive classes and progressively-minded sections of society and conform to the needs for developing the people's material condition. As a result, their influence on society's life and on social being is positive, for they contribute to society's progress.

Taken to their essential and deepest source, new progressive ideas arise from the development of production and the aggravation of the contradictions between the new productive forces and the obsolete relations of production. After arising on the basis of definite contradictions in people's material life, these new progressive ideas become a weapon in the hands of society's progressive forces, which is used for resolving these contradictions. These new progressive ideas mobilise people for solving the tasks facing society.

The influence of advanced ideas on social development is exercised through the practical revolutionary activity of the masses. New ideas can only lead people beyond the influence of the old ideas, but not beyond the bounds of the old system. In order to exert a material influence, they must become a material force. "The weapon of criticism," Marx wrote, "cannot, of course, replace criticism by weapons, material force must be overthrown by material force; but theory also becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses."[1]

One of the distinctive features of a progressive

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 182.

ideology is its ability to grip the working masses, since it expresses their genuine interests. But it does not do so automatically. This occurs in a bitter struggle between the new and the old ideas that have taken root over many generations. The struggle is for the minds of the masses and for the spread of a definite ideology, and is waged as a rule, by political parties.

4. The Structure of Social Consciousness

a) Social and Individual Consciousness

Social consciousness does not exist in isolation from concrete individuals. It exists in their minds in the form of definite ideas, outlooks, feelings and wishes, characteristic of individual people. This in no way implies that everything characteristic of the consciousness of any individual represents a component part of social consciousness. The latter encompasses only those ideas, outlooks, feelings and strivings that express the common interests of people in a class society, i.e. the common interests of a class or any other social group, collective, and so on.

The need thus arises for drawing a demarcation line between social and individual consciousness. Individual consciousness is the individual's spiritual world. It represents the thoughts, feelings, emotions, customs and strivings of a particular person. It takes shape during his lifetime and practical activities and reflects the material conditions of his existence. Since individual con-

sciousness expresses the practical experience and conditions of life of a particular person, all its features are unique for the individual. Even so, it includes ideas, feelings and strivings that are also typical of other people, in particular, of all members of the given class or society as a whole (under socialism). In this respect, therefore, it is richer than social consciousness. But an individual possesses, as a rule, only some, rather than all, the ideas current in society, which means that in other respects individual consciousness is more limited than social consciousness.

Individual and social consciousness are interrelated and dialectically united: they interpenetrate and mutually enrich each other.

b) Social Psychology and Ideology

The social consciousness of people is not homogeneous. It includes the most diverse spiritual phenomena, ranging from human feelings, experiences and moods to theories explaining the essence of society's life, the direction of its development, and so forth. Some of these phenomena reflect human social being vaguely, while others do it precisely and clearly; some phenomena spontaneously arise in people's every-day life, while others are deliberately created by a group of people.

Taking account of this heterogeneity of the spiritual phenomena making up the social consciousness of people, historical materialism singles out two different realms and, at the same time, two

tiers of social consciousness. These are social psychology and ideology.

The totality of feelings, strivings, experiences, customs, thoughts and moods that arise during people's every-day life and reflect their social being, constitute social psychology.

An ideology represents the totality of ideas and outlooks reflecting the material conditions of people's life and their social being in a systematised, logical form.

The distinguishing feature of social psychology is that it directly reflects the conditions of people's life and that this reflection is spontaneous and accidental, recording only the outward aspect of people's being. Social psychology cannot express the essence of people's material relations or the causes behind these relations and the direction in which they change. This is why it does not enable people to take their bearings in complex life situations and comprehend surrounding events.

Social psychology is the first stage in people's understanding of their social being.

As distinct from social psychology, ideology represents a higher stage of social consciousness and a more profound understanding by people of the material conditions of their life. Its mission is to expose the essence of human relations and to substantiate from the viewpoint of a particular social class the need for maintaining or changing these relations. *Ideology is the understanding of social being and all aspects of social life in a theoretical form. In contrast to psychology, which*

is spontaneously formed, it is developed by a special group of people, known as ideologists.

Ideology is closely linked with psychology and expresses the same aspects and trends of social being as psychology does, but in a more precise and logical form. It is not, however, created as a result of the further development of social psychology. It grows out of already existing theories and views on the basis of the spiritual material that has accumulated over previous development.

For example, socialist ideology resulted from the further elaboration of the economic, philosophical and sociological doctrines that preceded Marxism and from the generalisation of the development of science and the class struggle of the proletariat.

Once it has taken shape, the ideology exerts an active influence on human psychology and is thus instrumental in transforming spontaneous movements of particular social classes and social groups into conscious actions.

In a class society, the social psychology and ideology have a distinctly class nature. Each class has its own psychology and ideology reflecting its economic position in society and its place in the system of social production, as well as its requirements and interests.

c) Forms of Social Consciousness

The structure and composition of social consciousness has its own specific forms of existence and development, different from those of knowledge.

It has already been mentioned that social consciousness, which is a reflection of social being, does not remain passive, but exerts an active influence on the latter. Reflecting the different aspects of social being and influencing the most diverse sides of social life, social consciousness undergoes a process of differentiation. Some of its spheres begin to specialise in reflecting strictly circumscribed aspects of social being and in performing strictly prescribed social functions. This leads to the emergence of separate and independent forms of social consciousness possessing specific features and performing strictly defined social functions.

The major forms of social consciousness are: political ideology, legal consciousness, morals, the arts, religion, science and philosophy.

5. Political Ideology

A political ideology is a system of views which theoretically substantiate the policy pursued by some class or social group. Politics is a special type of relations between classes[1], nations[2] and parties; politics also specifies the content and forms of government and the involvement in it of classes and social groups.[3]

By affecting the relations between classes and determining the structure of the state and the

[1] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 228.
[2] Ibid., Vol. 35, pp. 272-73.
[3] Ibid., Vol. 41, pp. 381-82.

content of the activities of state bodies and institutions, a political ideology exercises a direct influence on the life of people and on society at large. By reflecting the genuine interests of a class in theoretically substantiated and systematised forms, a political ideology determines the programme of its activity, as well as the goals and forms of the class struggle, and introduces in it elements of organisation and co-ordination.

Being one of the ideological forms that is most closely related to the economy and that reflects it in the most concentrated form, political ideology is the intermediate link connecting the economic basis with the entire ideological superstructure. As a result, a political ideology inevitably leaves its imprint on other elements of the superstructure and on the forms of social consciousness. Political ideology permeates them, as it were, thus giving them a general ideological direction.

Take the history of capitalist society. In the first period of capitalist development, when the bourgeois political ideology was directed against the decaying feudal system and its political institutions, it demanded the abolition of society's division into estates and the equality of all social groups before the law, as well as the replacement of absolute monarchy by a democratic republic. Since the church protected society's division into estates and the existing state power, the fight against feudalism inevitably involved a fight against the church and the replacement of the idealistic outlook advocated by the church with an atheistic and materialistic world outlook tracing

the origin of political institutions to mundane causes, and stripping them of their former sanctity. Furthermore, since radical changes in the historically obsolete feudal society required the active participation of the working masses in the bourgeois revolution, this forced the bourgeoisie, whenever it was interested in the radical transformation of feudal relations–as it was, for example, in France–to advance a theory substantiating the participation of the mass of the people in the country's political life.

Thus, the emergence of a new ideology determined changes in the existing outlook, the attitude towards religion, the arrival of new sociological views, and so forth. There was one reason for all this–the bourgeoisie needed new ideas to theoretically substantiate its political programme and its right to remake society politically in order to consolidate its rule.

Once the bourgeoisie seizes state power, however, and the contradictions between it and the proletariat begin to intensify, its political ideology undergoes a drastic overhaul and becomes reactionary in nature. The bourgeoisie seeks to prove that the capitalist social system is the ultimate goal of historical progress, that it represents the most perfect social system ever created, and that the socialist-oriented class struggle is unlawful and unnatural, distorting the normal functioning of society's life, etc. The reactionary nature of the political ideology of the bourgeoisie immediately left its stamp on the other forms of social consciousness and, in particular, on philo-

sophy, which provided a convenient breeding ground for idealism, on morals, which began cultivating vile and racist principles and on the arts, which broke away from the realistic trends and became captive to formalistic and abstractionist schools, and so forth.

The political ideology of the exploiter classes plays a positive role only in the peroid of social development when the class whose interests it expresses is fighting to remake the historically obsolete production relations and heralds the advance of new production relations corresponding to the existing level of development of the productive forces. As soon as production relations, the economic foundation of the rule of the class concerned, come into conflict with the developing productive forces, its political ideology begins to play a negative and reactionary role. By defending historically obsolete social forms, it retards historical progress and becomes a brake on development.

As distinct from the political ideology of the exploiter classes, that of the proletariat is consistently progressive. History has assigned to the proletariat the mission of ending all exploitation, which absolutely precludes the replacement of one form of exploitation with another, as has happened in the past. To fulfil this mission the proletariat relies on the actual laws governing the functioning and development of society and on the objective trends in historical development, which demand the abolition of private ownership of the means of production and the establishment

of socialist ownership. The political ideology of the proletariat is thus consistently scientific. It expresses the needs of society's further development and strives to reflect the actual situation.

At the same time, the political ideology of the proletariat is profoundly partisan and class-conscious. It expresses its class interests and resolves issues bearing on the interrelationship of classes and nations, and on the forms and direction of state policy from the same class viewpoint. The partisan nature of the political ideology of the proletariat does not contradict its scientific character, since the class interests of the proletariat fully coincide with the requirements of social development.

Since this ideology is consistently scientific, it plays an exceptionally big part in the life of society. It activates the working people in their fight to remake society along socialist lines, and is a programme for their revolutionary activity, showing how to replace and drastically improve the obsolete social relations and institutions.

6. Legal Consciousness

Being a form of social consciousness typical of a class society, *legal consciousness is the totality of people's convictions concerning the justified or unjustified nature of acts, rights and duties of society's members and concerning the justice or injustice of laws.*

Legal views are class-conscious by nature. Every class has its own legal views and legal conscious-

ness. For example, the exploitation of the working people and mass unemployment are quite justified from the point of view of the bourgeoisie, but a crime from that of the proletariat. On the other hand, the struggle for the interests of the working people, for the abolition of exploitation and for the establishment of the new socialist society is just from the point of view of the proletariat, while the bourgeoisie considers it a crime.

It is the legal views of the ruling class that dominate in society. These views are entirely permeated by class interests and express attempts to establish a legal order to the liking and advantage of the ruling class. A legal order is nothing more than an order of human relationships in society, expressed and consolidated in laws and regulations, whose totality constitutes the law of the given society.

Though in a class society each class has its own legal views, the law in a society is one and binding for all classes and for all members of society. For the law to be observed by all, both those in whose interests it is enacted and those against whom it is aimed–it is enforced by the state and the state power. "For law," Lenin wrote, "is nothing without an apparatus capable of *enforcing* the observance of the standards of law."[1] This shows that the state and law are inseparable–they emerged at the same time and always exist together.

As distinct from customs and moral rules, which

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 471.

come into existence spontaneously, without any state form of codification or endorsement, legal rules must be endorsed by the will of the state and by the conscious activity of government. These rules are established or sanctioned by the state and are expressed in a special form—in the form of a law.

Taking all this into account, *law* may be defined as *the totality of rules for people's behaviour in society which express the will of the ruling class and which are established or sanctioned by the state with the aim of safeguarding, consolidating and developing the social relations and public order advantageous to the ruling class.*

The exploiting classes have always endeavoured to prove the non-class nature of law and legal order. In feudal society, the legend of the divine origin of law and of the sanctity and immutability of the existing legal order was widely circulated. Bourgeois ideologists stripped law of its divine halo and produced mundane reasons for its origin, but both they and their revisionist henchmen allege that law is above class and that it equally expresses and protects the interests of all classes, i.e. of the working people and the bourgeoisie alike. Reality, however, testifies to the contrary—bourgeois law serves the exploiters by expressing their interests and will, and is directed against the working people. Bourgeois law safeguards, in particular, private ownership of the means of production and legalises the exploitation of man by man, as well as the oppression and plunder of the workers.

As a reflection of surrounding reality and under the influence of Marxist ideology, the proletariat and the non-proletarian working masses form their own legal consciousness, which radically differs from that of the bourgeoisie. The working people begin to realise that the legality existing in bourgeois society protects the interests of the bourgeoisie and is directed against them.

Since the bourgeois legal system is geared to establish a public order to the liking and advantage of the ruling class, i.e. the bourgeoisie, and, in the first place, to safeguard private property, it is demolished in the course of the socialist revolution. "The era of utilising the legality created by the bourgeoisie," Lenin wrote, "is *giving way* to an era of tremendous revolutionary battles, and these battles, *in effect,* will be the destruction of all bourgeois legality, the whole bourgeois system. . ."[1]

The proletarian state which comes into being as the result of the socialist revolution replaces the demolished bourgeois legality and law with its own socialist legal order and socialist law corresponding to the legal consciousness of the working people.

Will socialist legality survive under communism? The future of socialist legality is intimately linked with that of the socialist state, for law is nothing without an apparatus to enforce it, i.e. without a state. As for the state, it will, of course, wither away when society develops into a full

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 16, p. 311.

communist system (provided there are no capitalist states left by that time). It will be replaced by organs of public self-government which will have no machinery of coercion at their disposal and which will rely entirely on moral public authority.

The abolition of the state will bring in the era of the abolition of law and legal consciousness, but this does not mean that, in communist society, there will be no social rules of human behaviour or views for explaining and evaluating these rules. Certain social rules will remain to regulate the relations among the members of society who are sure to observe them consciously and of their own free will. All these rules will, however, lose their legal character, since they will not require any protection from a special apparatus of coercion. The sole guarantee of their enforcement will be public opinion. This being so, they will not be treated as legal rules but rather as moral rules or customs, and will therefore, be associated not with legal but with moral consciousness.

7. Morality

a) The Essence of Morality

Man cannot exist outside society and the human collective which always places certain obligations on the behaviour of its members, so his actions should conform to the interests of society, which reserves judgement as to whether they are good or bad, justified or not.

The views current in society of people's actions, evaluating them as their being either good or bad, justified or unjustified, honest or dishonest, are known as moral views.

Moral views are codified and embodied in certain rules and standards of human behaviour which people observe in their relations. The totality of moral standards constitutes the morality of a society.

Thus, morality is a collection of standards and rules of human behaviour in society at a given stage of its development, expressing society's views (or those of some class) concerning human actions from the point of view of good or evil, justice or injustice, honesty or dishonesty.

In addition to moral standards, there are, of course, certain legal rules operating in society which, like the former, regulate human behaviour. Moral standards, however, differ drastically from legal ones, notably in that legal rules rest on state coercion. If some member of society refuses to observe a certain legal rule, the organs of power will force him to do so. Moral standards, however, do not have such a binding force. They are only backed by the force of public opinion and collective disapproval. Furthermore, while legal rules are established by the state and assume the form of a law, moral standards are established by society or a class by generalising the practice of human relations as well as people's notions of good, evil, justice, injustice and the moral ideal, which arise under the direct influence of the material conditions of life.

b) The Origins of Morality

Idealists hold that morality originated from consciousness, from a spiritual source. The ancient Greek philosopher Plato associated morality with the "idea of good", which is beyond human consciousness, while Kant related it to the outside world. There are also numerous attempts to trace morality from man's biological nature and, in particular, from instincts–a mother's protection of her offspring, the tribal instinct and that of mutual assistance. "Morality is not typical of mankind only, it exists among animals also and only expresses the social instinct."[1]

Some sociologists trace the origin of morality to the so-called eternal and unchanging qualities of man's nature–pugnacity or disposition towards good, etc.

Marxism has been the first to provide a truly scientific explanation of the origins and essence of morality based on the materialistic understanding of history.

Morality is a social phenomenon. It arises and exists only in society on the basis of joint production activity in the course of which the need emerges for regulating the relations between the individual and the collective, for defining the obligations of each member of the collective and the measure of punishment for shirking. It was people's joint labour activity that necessitated the co-

[1] Karl Kautsky, *Die materialistische Geschichtsauffassung*, Erster Band, 1929, Brl., S. 440.

ordination of the actions of the individual with those of the collective, and of personal with common interests. It also helped formulate definite notions concerning everyone's responsibilities to the collective and judgements of people's behaviour.

Initially people's notions of good and bad, just and unjust, and the corresponding standards of behaviour constituted the only regulators of social intercourse. Later customs and legal rules appeared in addition to moral standards.

Stressing the link between morality and people's production activity, Engels wrote: "...men, consciously or unconsciously, derive their ethical ideas in the last resort from the practical relations on which their class position is based–from the economic relations in which they carry on production and exchange."[1]

But if morality is brought into being by people's material conditions and their economic relations and also reflects these relations, it cannot be eternal and should change along with the changes in these conditions and economic relations. For example, in the initial stages of human society, when the level of development of the productive forces was extremely low and man was still unable to produce enough for his own subsistence, it was considered moral to slay old people who could not maintain themselves. Later on, however, when the material conditions of life changed and the productive forces developed,

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 114.

enabling people to produce a surplus product not vitally essential for the direct producer's existence people began to consider such actions immoral. Concern and respect for old people were now considered moral.

c) The Class Nature of Morality

When society became divided into classes drastic changes took place in morality. In the past morality had been the same for all members of society, but now this uniformity disappeared. Each class developed its own moral standards, its own morality. This is not accidental, since morality depends on the people's material conditions of life, and since the antagonistic classes have diametrically opposite conditions of life in a class society it is only natural that these classes should have differing ideas of good and bad, justice and injustice, and that they should be guided by quite different social principles.

It is always the moral views and the corresponding morality expressing the interests of the ruling class that hold sway in society. The ruling class seeks to make its moral views and corresponding standards binding for the entire society, but since moral standards are not backed by the force of state coercion, as is the case with law, the working people's public opinion neither recognizes these standards as moral, nor observes them; it disregards the public opinion of the exploiters. With their growing class consciousness, the working people acquire their own moral views

and moral principles, which are directly opposite to those of the ruling bourgeois class.

In capitalist society, for example, the morality of the capitalists, the bourgeois morality, predominates. Private ownership of the means of production serves as the economic foundation of this morality. Yet in the view of the Russian proletarian writer Maxim Gorky, private ownership disunites people, arms them against one another, creates an irreconcilable clash of interests, lies to conceal or justify this clash and corrupts everybody with a torrent of slander, hypocrisy and malice.

The principle of sale and purchase dominates in bourgeois society. Everything is a commodity. Not only consumer goods can be bought, but also people, their blood and conscience. Money becomes the main criterion of human relations. Those who have money, no matter how they acquired it, are considered honest and enjoy respect. In his pursuit of profit, the bourgeois would flout moral standards and would commit crime.

Bourgeois morality fosters egoism and individualism. "Man unto man is a wolf", "self comes first", "charity begins at home", "everybody for himself", "only God cares for everybody"—such are the principles of bourgeois morality.

But apart from bourgeois morality, a new higher morality emerges in bourgeois society, the morality of the progressive class called upon to liberate mankind from poverty and exploitation. This is the morality of the proletariat.

It takes shape as the proletariat joins battle against the exploiters and as soon as it develops a class consciousness. Mikhail Kalinin, a prominent Soviet public and political figure, wrote that proletarian morality took shape in work–in factories and workshops.

The principles of the proletarian morality are directly opposite to those of the bourgeoisie. Whereas bourgeois morality rests on individualism, egoism and a disregard for society and the collective, proletarian ethics is based on collectivism and comradely mutual assistance.

Characterising the revolutionary workers, Marx wrote: ". . .Brotherhood among people is not an empty phrase for them–it is the truth; and the whole beauty of humanity looks at us from their work-roughened faces."[1]

In capitalist society the word "comrade" sounds as a call for unity in the struggle against the oppressors, and is a symbol of proletarian power, the organisation and unity of its ranks.

The sense of comradeship becomes especially pronounced after the overthrow of the exploiters, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of socialist ownership of the means of production which, in contrast to private ownership that rouses hatred among people, unites people, and stirs and develops this sense of comradeship.

Proletarian morality, being the morality of a

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[1] K. Marx, and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1930, p. 661 (in Russian).

class, is, at the same time, the morality of all working people. This is because in its struggle against the exploiters the proletariat defends not only its own interests, but also those of the entire nation, inasmuch as it wages a struggle not only for its own liberation from the capitalist yoke, but also for that of all working people. So during the building of communism, the morality of the working class becomes gradually transformed into a communist morality, which expresses the interests of all working people.

By communist morality we mean everything that "serves to destroy the old exploiting society and to unite all the working people around the proletariat, which is building up a new, a communist society."[1]

Communist morality is thus subordinated to "the interests of the proletariat's class struggle."[2] "Communist morality is based on the struggle for the consolidation and completion of communism."[3]

Communist morality, besides the principles of collectivism and comradeship already mentioned includes certain other principles and rules. These are loyalty to the cause of communism; affection for the socialist motherland; honest labour for the sake of society; protection and accumulation of socialist wealth; awareness of social duty and intolerance of infringements on social interests;

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[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 293.
[2] Ibid., p. 291.
[3] Ibid., p. 295.

humane relations and mutual respect; honesty and truthfulness, simplicity and modesty in public and private life; mutual respect in the family and concern for the upbringing of children; intolerance of national and racial hostility; irreconcilable attitude towards enemies of communism, of peace and the freedom of nations; fraternal solidarity with the working people af all countries, with all nations of the world.

Communist morality takes shape and consolidates itself in the fight against bourgeois morality, against the vestiges of the past in people's consciousness and actions. "The higher the level of our society in its development," it was stated at the 25th CPSU Congress, "the more intolerable are the still occurring departures from the socialist rules of morality."[1]

d) Elements of the Universal in Morality

Despite its class nature, morality includes standards of behaviour that are common to different classes and different epochs, and are of a universal human nature. The presence of such standards is explained by the fact that any people's collective requires that all members of society should observe certain elementary rules of behaviour without which the existence of human society is inconceivable. Among such standards are

[1] L. I. Brezhnev, *Report of the CPSU Central Committee and the Immediate Tasks of the Party in Home and Foreign Policy. XXVth Congress of the CPSU*, p. 94.

the parents' concern for children and the children's affection for their parents, respect for old people, politeness, modesty, keeping one's word, and standards condemning hooliganism, rape, and so forth.

These universal moral standards should not be considered in isolation from their historical context. Like the principles that express the interests of a particular class, iniversal ethical norms are also an outcome of social development. Having arisen in the remote past, they are passed down from generation to generation, taking on a richer form. Different epochs create different conditions for the universal moral standards. Though in origin they are not associated with classes, the relations dominating in a class society leave a definite imprint on them, and in this way change them in one direction or another. For example, the lust of enrichment, a permanent feature of the exploiters, and the constant want of the working people, have often led to distortions and violations of the elementary rules of human behaviour. "...The fundamental social cause of excesses, which consist in the violation of the rules of social intercourse, is the exploitation of the people, their want and their poverty", Lenin wrote.[1]

Only in a classless society, with new comradely relations among all its members, can there be conditions for the observance of these rules of behaviour. And though in contemporary socialist society an apparatus of coercion is required to

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 464.

ensure their observance, with the transition to communism the basic rules of social behaviour will be observed by all people without any coercion: their observance will become a habit. Thus, with the establishment of socialist and, later, of communist society, the sphere of universal aspects in morality widens.

e) The Criterion of the Truth in Morality

Since in society classes have different views concerning good, evil, justice and injustice, i.e. different and even directly opposite moral standards, the question naturally arises as to which of these views and moral standards are true and what is the criterion for the moral truth.

There are many points of view on this problem, but for bourgeois sociologists the one common feature is that all of them, as a rule, reject objective criteria of morality.

The moral relativists claim that it is impossible to establish any reliable criteria for drawing a demarcation line between moral and immoral. "To define the correctness of actions," Hellmuth Stofer writes, "one last and decisive argument is missing.... The obligation ... rests empirically on multifarious commandments and prohibitions, whereas the correctness of the ideals, taken as a criterion, represents no more than a supposition."[1]

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[1] Hellmuth Stofer, *Uber das ethische Werturteil*, 1955, Basel, S. 25, 157.

The positivists also reject objective criteria for the evaluation of ethical views. In their opinion, the notions of good, evil, better and worse are simply designed to express the fact that a certain individual considers the given action to be such. The opinion of that individual is not, however, binding for other people who may have their own and differing opinions on this score. It is thus simply impossible to establish which of these opinions is true.

Cassius Keyser's viewpoint is a relevant example. He writes: "Ethics has its roots in certain sentiments. What the sentiments are is indicated by such terms as right, wrong, good, bad, better, worse, evil, duty, obligation, ought, ought not. Like everything else, the ethical sentiments are what they are. Wherever they occur, whenever they occur, they occur as facts, as facts of nature...",[1] i.e. as strictly individual phenomena. They are erratic and fragmentary. They differ with various individuals and at different times, they depend on the circumstances and time. Because of this, he continues, the rules engendered by ethical opinions and the views associated with these rules are also different and subject to change.

Keyser holds that all moral principles and views must be grouped so that each group includes only those that do not contradict each other. There will then be as many moral systems as there are groups.

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[1] Cassius Jackson Keyser, *The Collected Works*, Vol. II, N. Y., 1952, p. 242.

According to Keyser, as many moral systems can be built as there are different opinions among people, but since their number is infinitely large, so is that of morals.

Each of these systems, Keyser claims, will reflect the ethical opinion of some man and on this strength it is true, since it records an actual fact of reality.

Keyser fully ignores the fact that, despite differences in moral judgements between some people, there is something common in them, which is determined by the position these people occupy in society and in the production of material goods. This common element in evaluating a phenomenon assumes the form of a system of moral principles recognised by all members of the group, say, the representatives of one class, though some members of the group will certainly evaluate this phenomenon differently. Individual ethical views will also occur, but neither these variations nor the individual approach in evaluating phenomena in the least preclude the existence of an ethical system common for the representatives of the class. This system will exist and hew its way forward as a general trend through all these many variations.

Thus, we see that idealist philosophy, while speculating on the individual nature of people's ethical views, rejects the common nature of moral standards for social groups and, at the same time, the objective criterion of morality.

So how is the question concerning the criterion of morality and the truth of moral standards solved?

The morality of each epoch and of each class reflects the material conditions of life and the economic situation of people. It is this that determines the historically relatively changing nature of moral views and standards. Similar to the development of the material conditions of human life, objective progress may also be observed in the realm of morality. Marxism solves the question concerning the truth of morality with respect to this progressive development of society. *A morality that to the maximum extent conforms to the progressive advancement of society, while safeguarding the future and reflecting the tasks of society's progressive development, is the truer morality.* And only the proletarian communist morality can be such a morality. On the issue of which form of morality in capitalist society is the true one, Engels writes: "...The maximum elements promising permanence which, in the present, represents the overthrow of the present, represents the future, and that is proletarian morality."[1]

8. The Arts

a) The Specifics of Art as a Form of Social Consciousness

Art, which represents one of the major forms of social consciousness, plays a big part in the spiritual development of society.

Some contemporary bourgeois aestheticians

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, pp. 113-14.

claim that art is a means of people's self-improvement. According to this theory, anyone who practices art improves himself to the extent of his capacities, which are manifested outside his self in the works of art he has created. There arises, as it were, a competition between people in spiritual self-improvement which, in the end, leads to the development of people's spiritual life. As we see, works of art are said to be created not to meet a specific social requirement, but to take a step forward in self-improvement.

There is little doubt that in creating a work of art the artist improves himself and his artistic skill, thus developing and enriching his spiritual life. But is this really the essence of art as a social phenomenon? Of course not. Art, being a social phenomenon, emerged and developed in response to the requirement that had arisen among people to derive aesthetic pleasure. Artists, therefore, create their works not for themselves or their own self-improvement, but for other people. The fact of self-improvement while creating works of art is not at all decisive, since self-improvement also takes place in the course of scientific research, during the process of teaching and in the course of many other social functions.

Some bourgeois students of aesthetics maintain that the specific features of art are that art, being subjective in nature, presupposes "concrete and direct acquaintance with the values of experience", while science, which reflects precisely measurable aspects and relations may be treated as "objective."

The fallacy of this is evident: the difference between art and science lies not in that the latter reflects the objective truth while the former does not, but rather in the different way in which they reflect it. To create a work of art a "concrete and direct acquaintance with the values of experience" alone is not at all sufficient. For this one needs a logical understanding of this experience, an insight into the nature of perceived objects and events and a knowledge of their essence.

The specific features of art as a form of social consciousness are determined by its subject-matter and the artistic form of reflection of reality and the functions performed by it in society.

The subject-matter of art is extensive. It covers all the areas of people's life and activity. Reflecting some side of reality, art, in contrast to science where cognition is aimed at reflecting the objective characteristics of an object or reality, reflects the object in terms of its relation to the subject. Besides, art reproduces not only the qualities of the object, but also the subject's emotional response to these qualities.

The specifics of an object reflected in art determine the specifics of the form of reflection, i.e. of an artistic image whose content represents a reflection of reality and its assessment by the artist, including information about the world at large, about the artist himself who is cognising the world, and about his feelings, thoughts, desires, and so forth.

In contrast to science, where reflection takes the form of concepts, i.e. general ideal notions reproducing in people's consciousness the requisite as-

pects and relationships of the object under study, in art these are reflected in a concrete-emotional and visual-imaginative form, i.e. in the form of a unique and non-reproducible phenomenon. While focusing attention on certain aspects of the depicted phenomenon, the artist expresses its essence, intrinsic regularities and development trends, as well as assesses it in conformity with his world outlook.

Art is peculiar in that it incorporates the unity of reflection of reality and the practical creation of the aesthetic values that embody the aesthetic ideals of society. The unity of these aspects is graphically reflected in an artistic image, which constitutes both a form of artistic cognition and an embodied outcome of creative activity–artistic practice. An artistic image is created through its embodiment in the material means available to a particular kind of art (form, colour, line, sound, movement, and the like.) An artistic image thus acquires a concrete and imaginative objectivity and becomes knowable.

But it is the ideological and emotional content that is of paramount importance for a work of art. Art primarily represents the realm of the production of spiritual values.

b) The Social Functions of Art

Art is an ancient form of social consciousness. It has its history and its logic of development, determined by the general laws of society's development. Like any other form of social being, it

reflects the trends in people's changing material conditions of life and the requirements of historical progress.

Representing both the aesthetic apprehension of reality and its creative transformation, art was in its earliest stage directly linked with the labour and everyday life of primitive man and his community.

What compelled primitive man, who "was absolutely crushed by the burden of existence, by the difficulties of the struggle against Nature,"[1] to practice art? The social impulse that engendered the aesthetic reproduction of reality and aesthetic activity was related to man's wish of knowing the world, comprehending his place in it and transforming it. It was a human need to influence and transform nature in conformity with society's requirements, which acted as the impelling force of cognition. For his normal functioning and the development of his productive activity, man needed knowledge of many objects and phenomena: the habits of animals, the structure of their bodies, the properties of trees, rocks and the soil, as well as of the recurrent natural phenomena–the seasons for hunting, fishing and farming. Due to the fact that the intellectual activity of primitive man was united with his labour activity through actions involving emotions and concrete objects and phenomena, knowledge assumed an artistic and imaginative form presupposing a definite unity of the subject and object. The accumulated emotional ex-

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 111.

perience of primitive man was embodied and understood in artistic images. The graffiti usually depicting animals, testify to our ancestors' keen power of observation and ability accurately to depict the postures, movements and powers of wild animals. They prove that primitive man knew his "models" well.

At these initial stages of social development artistic and imaginative comprehension of the world permeated all aspects of labour. The preparations for a labour process (hunting or sowing) or a military attack gave rise to creative activity. The latter was very effective since it included the elements of rehearsal for the main event (songs, dances and sketches of hunting, farming and other scenes), as well as psychological training of the members of the tribe.

As production developed further and the social division of labour increased, art became separated from practical material activities and grew into a specific field of creative activity. At the same time, a small group of people appeared who began specialising in this field. The other part of society was entirely preoccupied with the production of material goods for those who, enjoying a dominant position in society, acquired the right to practice art.

Even after art separated from production activities and became an independent form of spiritual creativity, it did not lose its links with people's material life, and in its contents and development trends reflected the changes taking place in economic relations.

"Sancho," Marx and Engels wrote, "imagines that Raphael produced his pictures independently of the division of labour that existed in Rome at the time... Raphael as much as any other artist was determined by the technical advances in art made before him, by the organisation of society and the division of labour in his locality, and, finally, by the division of labour in all the countries with which his locality had intercourse."[1]

As dictinct from such forms of social consciousness as politics or law, art is not directly connected with the economic basis. Its links with the economy are mediated by many factors, including politics, law and morality.

Not the economic basis alone influences the development of art. There are other contributing factors, including the level of development of society's political and spiritual life and the peculiarities of the class struggle in the respective historical stage. This is the main reason why a peak in the development of art does not always coincide with economic growth, but may occur at a time of acute economic depression. A case in point is nineteenth-century Russian art, which exemplifies the relative independence typical of social consciousness in general.

Art performs a number of functions in society, the main one being to meet society's aesthetic requirements. Art's ability to do so constitutes its aes-

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, pp. 441-42.

thetic nature—an important feature which sets art apart from other social phenomena.

While noting the ability to meet people's aesthetic requirements as a specific function of art, we should remember that this is not its sole function. Art also performs a number of other important functions, such as being a means or a form of knowing reality. Besides, it helps to educate people and foster definite moral, political, philosophical and other principles.

Works of art express the complexity of people's feelings and ideals relative to a definite epoch and embody the main trends of the social ideology and psychology of the given historical period. They reflect society's most burning problems. This, in fact, is one of the manifestations of the social character of art. It always serves the society concerned and reflects life from the viewpoint of the ideals and interests of specific social groups and classes, which is why art is always partisan in a class society. While formulating the principle of the partisanship of art, Lenin stressed that proletarian art should serve the cause of emancipating the working people from exploitation and of building a classless communist society. The writing of fiction, he pointed out, "cannot, in fact, be an individual undertaking, independent of the common cause of the proletariat."[1] Discussing the specific features of art, Lenin stressed that it does not yield to mechanical pressure and egalitarianism. Here, he wrote, "there is no question, either, that in this

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 45.

field greater scope must undoubtedly be allowed for personal initiative, individual inclination, thought and fantasy, form and content."[1]

Art is one of the effective means designed by society to promote the realisation of its tasks. It is not by chance that the CPSU and the Soviet Government attach so much importance to art in the communist education of Soviet people. Basing itself on the principle of socialist realism, which, besides a true reflection of reality from a critical point of view, presupposes the promotion of the best ways for change (which is a characteristic feature of this principle), Soviet art brings to light the contradictions that develop in the course of building communism and promotes their speedy resolution. By depicting the future, Soviet art cultivates among Soviet people the traits that man will have in communist society.

Works of art depict people by demonstrating their way of life and exposing their characters and their inner world. Through his characters, the artist teaches people how to treat certain social phenomena, what people to imitate and what people to oppose, how to behave under specific circumstances and which causes to espouse.

9. Religion

a) Origins and Essence of Religion

Religion is a fantastic and illusory reflection in people's consciousness of the outside forces domi-

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 46.

nating them in everyday life. In this reflection, earthly forces assume the form of supernatural ones. Religion is associated with belief in deities and the performance of rites.

Religion emerged in the first stages of the formation of human society, when, due to the low level of development of the productive forces, man was helpless in his struggle against the spontaneous forces of nature. The dependence on spontaneous forces and the lack of knowledge of their causes conditioned man's deification of these forces and the appearance of the belief that deities engender and control these forces.

Later on, when society became divided into classes and some sections of society began to exploit others, people came under the spell of the spontaneous forces of society which began causing the working people "...the most horrible suffering and the most savage torment, a thousand times more severe than those inflicted by extraordinary events..."[1] This was a second, additional cause of religion and an object of religious reflection. "In the beginnings of history", Engels wrote, "it was the forces of nature which were first so [religiously–*Ed*] reflected.... But it is not long before, side by side with the forces of nature, social forces begin to be active–forces which confront man as equally alien and at first equally inexplicable, dominating him with the same apparent natural necessity as the forces of nature themselves. The fantastic figures, which at first only reflected the

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, p. 406.

mysterious forces of nature, at this point acquire social attributes, become representatives of the forces of history."[1]

In bourgeois society, capital is this additional spontaneous force, opposed to man and dominating him; it constantly threatens the worker and petty trader with "sudden", "unexpected" and "accidental" ruin, which would turn him into a pauper. In capitalist society the fear of losing his job and hence all means of subsistence never leaves the worker.

Apprehensions concerning the future and a feeling of insecurity brought about by people's helplessness vis-à-vis the spontaneous forces of capital inevitably lead people to religion, reinforce and develop their religious feelings.

b) The Class Nature of Religion

In antagonistic societies religion serves the exploiters. Besides the state which establishes the order conforming to the interests of the exploiters and suppresses any resistance on the part of the exploited, the exploiters need means for spiritually enslaving the working people in order to retain supremacy. It is this function which religion is called upon to fulfil. "All oppressing classes," Lenin wrote, "stand in need of two social functions to safeguard their rule: the function of the hangman and the function of the priest. The hangman is required to quell the protests and the indigna-

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, pp. 374-75.

tion of the oppressed; the priest is required to console the oppressed, to depict to them the prospects of their sufferings and sacrifices being mitigated . . . while preserving class rule, and thereby to reconcile them to class rule, win them away from revolutionary action, undermine their revolutionary spirit and destroy their revolutionary determination."[1]

Religion justifies exploitation and the existence of the classes of oppressors and oppressed; it pleads for obedience to the authority by stressing that every kind of authority originates in God; it teaches people humility and calls on them to bear the earthly burden patiently, no matter how heavy it is, since it is sent by the Almighty to redeem their sins.

Exposing the reactionary essence of Christianity, Marx wrote: "The social principles of Christianity justified the slavery of antiquity, glorified the serfdom of the Middle Ages and are capable, in case of need, of defending the oppression of the proletariat. . ."[2]

To compensate for people's sufferings and privations, religion promises them the divine reward of eternal bliss in "the other world", i.e. after death. It alleges that in "the other world", the exploiters and exploited would change places; the former would be eternally tormented while the latter would live in paradise.

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[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, pp. 231-32.

[2] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 231.

Religion distracts the working people from the pressing problems of reality, from the struggle for emancipation and for conditions worthy of man.

c) The Abolition of the Social Base of Religion Under Socialism

By sweeping out capitalist production relations and the corresponding bourgeois superstructure in the course of the socialist revolution, the proletariat also rejects religion and wins for itself a better life on earth.[1]

A radical improvement in the people's social life is brought about by the abolition of the private ownership of the means of production and by the elimination of the economic and political domination of the last exploiting class (the bourgeoisie) and with it the elimination of exploitation of man by man. A radical change occurs in the life of society. With the establishment of socialist ownership of the means of production, the conditions of life which dominated people in the past come under their power and control.

The laws governing their social actions, which opposed them as alien, objective and spontaneous in the past, are presently used by them with knowledge and skill. From this moment on, people begin to create their history consciously.[2] All this undermines the social roots of religion and creates the conditions necessary for it to disappear.

[1] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 84.
[2] See F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, pp. 337-38.

Religion does not, however, disappear immediately once socialist society has been built. It continues to exist for quite a long time under socialism. In contrast to the exploiting society, however, where religion is an inevitable product of the contradictions in people's social being and the material conditions of their life, religion in socialist society mainly represents a vestige of the past, for the changes in people's social being are not immediately matched by changes in their consciousness. Old ideas and views survive for some time in the form of traditions and customs, even under conditions of the changed social being. This is why religious views survive in socialist society.

The survival of these views is undoubtedly encouraged by the influence of capitalist countries, where religion and the church occupy a dominant position, as well as by all sorts of natural calamities and personal tragedies.

10. Science

a) The Essence of Science

Science is a major form of social consiousness, representing *the aggregate or system of people's knowledge of nature, society and thinking. Its main objective and social function lies in cognising reality and in discovering the laws governing its functioning and development.*

Science reflects the world and records phenomena cognised in the form of notions, judgements,

opinions, theories and so forth. Besides notions, judgements and theories that have been proved in practice and have acquired the meaning of the objective truth constituting the main content of science, it also includes certain factual data and scientific information as well as scientific hypotheses.

Science reflects nature and the life of society. In this connection all the concrete sciences are grouped into natural and social sciences. Natural sciences deal with the law-governed properties and connections (laws) of animate and inanimate nature. Social sciences study various aspects of the life of society, as well as the laws governing the functioning and development of the social organism.

The social sciences that study society and social relations are closely connected with classes and the class struggle. For this reason, they merge with the ideology that reflects the social being of people through the prism of the interests of a specific class.

The natural sciences are not directly connected with relations among social groups or with the class struggle. They are linked with classes through production, which they serve and on whose basis they develop.

b) The Connection Between Science and Production

By discovering the laws governing the interrelationship and development of the objects and phe-

nomena of the external world, science provides production with the data it requires to purposefully change some aspects of nature and create the material wealth needed by man. This proves that science exerts a strong influence on the development of production, but the inverse influence, that of production on science, is much stronger.

This influence is effected along the following lines:

(1) Production sets science the task of investigating certain phenomena that are required for its development. It is production's need for certain information on the external world, in order for it to function and develop normally, that gave rise to the sciences and helped them to progress.

For example, arithmetic and geometry appeared in the remote past in response to people's need to measure areas of land more or less accurately. Mechanics emerged in order to create devices for hoisting heavy objects and for pumping water out of pits. Electrical engineering began to develop rapidly when people discovered the possibility of using electricity in production. Physiology, biology and other sciences dealing with the laws governing the functioning and development of animals and plants came into being in response to the requirements of farming, and so on.

(2) Production provides science with the instruments, tools and technical equipment required for scientific research and experiments. Nowadays, the interrelationship between science and technology, and the former's dependence on the latter are especially pronounced. Today science cannot develop

successfully without, for example, a charged particle accelerator designed for studying the structure of nuclei, without electronic ultramicroscopes, computers, etc.

(3) Another way in which production exerts influence upon science is that it provides considerable factual data which science studies theoretically, generalises and on whose basis (plus, of course, the findings received by scientists in the course of their research) it creates scientific theories and discovers new laws.

The dependence of science on production is not absolute. Science, like any other form of social consciousness, possesses a certain independence which, in particular, manifests itself in science's reposing not only on the state of production, but also on previous achievements in some field of knowledge, i.e. on the stage that science has reached in its development, and on the concrete resolution of its intrinsic problems. For instance, the nuclear theory emerged not while production problems were being solved, but rather as a solution so specific problems of physics. Radar and television originated in the same way.

For this reason, the level of development of science does not always correspond to that of production. Science may develop faster than the requirement of some industry or may lag behind them.

This proves that, besides the law that the development of science depends on production, science has its own laws of development, in particular that of succession, which stipulates that scientific pro-

gress always directly depends on the mass of knowledge inherited from the previous generations.

c) The Interrelationships Between Science, the Basis and the Superstructure

Being one of the major forms of social consciousness, science occupies a position of its own and differs radically from other forms of social consciousness. This difference is mainly manifested in its relations with the superstructure. All other forms of social consciousness, such as political ideology, juridical, moral, aesthetic and religious views, constitute a part of superstructural phenomena. The situation is different as far as the relations between science and the superstructure are concerned. This, admittedly, is still a controversial issue. Some scholars consider science part of the superstructure, while many others do not. There are also some who refer only social sciences and the fundamental conclusions of natural sciences to the superstructure.

In our opinion, the theory that science does not relate to the superstructure seems more convincing. The point is that all sorts of objective truths, manifested in relevant theories, laws and notions, constitute the basic content of science. And the objective truth is a state of human knowledge that depends on neither man nor mankind but rather reflects the objective situation. This being so, science cannot be part of the superstructure, since its dependence on the economic basis and on the classes that arise from it is its major feature.

It may appear at first glance that the social sciences depend on the basis, reflect and safeguard the interests of one class or another. This is why some scholars refer them to the superstructure. Indeed, the content of the social sciences may form part of the superstructure if they conform to the interests of the ruling class. When scientific precepts or theories contradict the interests of the ruling class, however, the latter discards them, proves them false and relies on precepts and theories that, no matter how erroneous they may be, do conform to its interests. True propositions and theories, however, neither disappear nor lose their scientific force simply because the ruling class disregards them, but continue to exist and develop in accordance with their intrinsic scientific laws which differ from those of the superstructure.

Economic, social, historical and other social views are, as a rule, related to the superstructure. They express the interests of definite classes. Since the social sciences reflect the objective truth, which depends neither on man nor on mankind, they do not possess the traits typical of the superstructure. Social views related to the ideological superstructure may coincide with the social sciences and rely on them, thus providing a scientific background for the ideology. This is the case in socialist society, where the Marxist-Leninist doctrine on society is both a science and an ideological superstructure at the same time. Social views, however, may not coincide with the genuine social science. It will exist alongside or despite such

views. This is how matters stand, in particular, in capitalist society, where bourgeois views on society are not scientific and the social sciences that exist alongside them hew their way forward in constant conflict with these views.

The fact that science in itself is not a superstructure on the economic basis does not mean that the basis exerts no influence on science. The basis does affect science. It is the basis that determines the directions in which science will develop, as well as the problems and issues it studies and the rate of scientific progress.

Thus, in capitalist society the economic basis determines the fact that scientific research and the way its findings are utilised are devoted to the objectives of producing surplus value. The fact that, in capitalist society, the main scientific efforts nowadays are concentrated on research, which in one way or another is related to military production, is merely further proof that the economic basis determines the direction of scientific progress.

Science develops in a quite different fashion in socialist society. Here the achievements of science are directed to developing the productive forces and raising the material well-being of the working people. In the socialist countries, science is the bearer of progress, creative activity and the instrument for subordinating the forces of nature and society to the needs of building socialism and communism. It underlies not only the organisation of production and its management, but also that of society's life, the regulation of social processes

and the transformation of social relations, i.e. all the practical activities of the people. By extending the sphere in which science is applied, socialist production relations create all the requisite conditions for it to progress rapidly.

Chapter XVI

THE ROLE OF THE MASSES AND THE INDIVIDUAL IN HISTORY. SOCIETY AND THE INDIVIDUAL

1. The Masses as a Decisive Force of Social Progress

Pre-Marxian sociologists considered that the spiritual principle played the determining part in historical development. So they presented great personalities–enlightened monarchs, kings, lawmakers, scientists, philosophers and other individuals engaged in science, politics and art–instead of the masses who produced the essential means of subsistence, as subjects of historical progress. As for the masses, they were proclaimed a blind inert force, representing an obstacle to historical progress and able to take positive initiative under the leadership of great personalities.

Marxism has refuted these anti-scientific theories which downgraded the role of the masses in social development, thus distorting the actual situation for the sake of the exploiting classes. Marx and Engels, who established the determining role of production in society's life, came to the conclusion that it is not great personalities, no matter how brilliant they may be, that represent the major force of social progress, but the masses.

Referring to the latter as the decisive force of historical progress, we should have a clear idea of their composition, i.e. which social groups and classes they include.

The masses are mainly made up of those classes and social groups whose labour ensures society's existence and development. These are, in the first place, the working people who create the material goods, the scientific and technological intelligentsia related to the production process, the workers in the service industries, scientists, those working in the fields of culture and art and those who are engaged in the upbringing and training of the rising generation.

The composition of the masses does not remain constant: it changes as society makes the transition from one stage of development to another, in particular, that from one socio-economic system to another. In slave-owning society the masses were the slaves, the artisans and the indigent sections of the free population; under feudalism–the peasantry, the artisans and the emergent bourgeoisie; under capitalism–the proletariat, the peasantry, the petty and middle bourgeoisie who are interested in society's development, as well as the progressive intelligentsia; in socialist society–the working class, the peasantry and the intelligentsia, and once the exploiting classes are finally eliminated–the entire nation.

The determining role of the masses in society's development manifests itself, above all, in the fact that the masses, representing the major productive force, set the means of labour in motion and

effect the production of material wealth required for the existence and development of society. While constantly improving the means of labour and their labour skills, the masses develop the productive forces of society and make it imperative for the old production relations, which begin to inhibit development, to be replaced by new ones corresponding to the level of the productive forces.

But this is not all that the role of the masses in social progress amounts to. By developing the productive forces, the masses take a most active part in supplanting one type of production relations with another and in the struggle to change the social and political system. Any new class which represents a more progressive mode of production works for victory by gaining the support of the masses, who are the main motive force of any social revolution. By participating in a social revolution, the masses pursue their own immediate goal of improving their living standard. However, by destroying the old production relations, they contribute to the development of production relations corresponding to the new productive forces, and thus ensure historical progress.

In periods of social revolution, the creative abilities and the initiative of the masses manifest themselves in a more pronounced form than in periods when society is developing peacefully. "...The organising abilities of the people...," Lenin wrote, "are revealed a million times more strongly, fully and productively in periods of revolutionary whirlwind than in periods of so-called

calm (dray-horse) historical progress."[1] "Revolutions," he wrote on the same score, "are festivals of the oppressed and the exploited. At no other time are the mass of the people in a position to come forward so actively as creators of a new social order, as at a time of revolution. At such times the people are capable of performing miracles. . . ."[2]

It is not only in periods of social revolution, however, that the masses influence the political aspect of the life of society: the same happens in periods of peaceful development. By their active opposition, the working masses prevent the realisation of reactionary schemes worked out by the ruling classes and directed against the working people, national independence, peace and democracy.

Since the masses represent the determining force of economic and political development, they make a sizable contribution to the advancement of culture—science and art. These arose and developed on the basis of people's labour activities and, at the initial stages, formed a component part of them. By transforming reality and by creating new material goods that do not exist in a natural form, the masses developed their consciousness, mental abilities and capacity to create spiritual values, which are a materialised generalisation of people's transforming activities. Later on, when manual labour separated from intellectual

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 259.
[2] *Ibid.*, Vol. 9, p. 113.

work, spiritual activity became a monopoly of special social groups–classes. Even then, the role of the masses in the development of culture did not diminish, for the latter has its roots deep among the people and draws its inspiration from the ideas, feelings and strivings cherished by the masses. Maxim Gorky wrote that the people constitute not only the force that creates material wealth, but also the only eternal source of spiritual values. They are philosopher and poet, unsurpassed from the point of view of the topicality, beauty and brilliance of their works, who write all the great poems and tragedies, including the greatest of them all–the history of world culture.

It is no accident that culture and art flourish in those periods of historical development when art comes to grips with obsolete social forms and battles for the realisation of progressive trends which arise in the masses and thus expresses the ideas, thoughts and aspirations of the overwhelming majority in society. Such, for instance, was the situation in France prior to the great bourgeois Revolution of 1789 and in 19th-century Russia during the struggle against serfdom and the monarchy.

In describing the role of the masses in the development of culture, one should not forget that by their labour the masses create the material goods required by the intellectuals.

By tracing the influence of the masses on the development of various aspects of social life, Marx and Engels discovered that the role of the masses in historical progress inevitably increases.

This pattern is a necessary consequence of the history-making process which grows in scope as the transition is made from one socio-economic system to another; in society's consistent advance the transformations of the social organism become more profound and all-embracing. Thus, the transition from the slave-owning system to feudalism saw changes in the forms of ownership, the state, the law and social consciousness. These changes did not, however, effect any radical alterations in the working people's condition or their economic and political status. They continued, as before, to work for the owners of the means of production, thus making up the labour force, which the exploiters used to their advantage. Like the slaves, they had neither political rights nor civil liberties, but the transition to capitalism brought about more radical and sizable changes. Capitalism offered civil liberties to the working people (though without proper guarantees), as well as certain political rights. The law formally proclaimed the equality of the exploiters and the exploited, but since private ownership of the means of production remained, the social position of the working people did not change. For the first time social transformations become all-round and profound only with the transition from capitalism to socialism. In the course of the socialist revolution radical changes take place in the economic, political and cultural spheres of the life of society: private ownership of the means of production is eradicated, antagonistic classes and the exploitation of man by man

are abolished; the domination is established of the working class–the proletariat–who uses state power to carry out gradual social transformations along socialist lines and to build communist society; considerable changes occur in public ideology –it becomes scientifically grounded for the first time and begins to express the interests of the proletariat and the working people in general.

The expanded scope of social transformations and their profound nature makes it imperative for a growing number of people to become involved in history-making. "As man's history-making activity grows broader and deeper," Lenin wrote, "the size of that mass of the population which is the conscious maker of history is bound to increase."[1]

It is, therefore, no accident that the masses are much more active in capitalist society than in feudal or slave-owning societies. Under socialism, this activity becomes all-embracing, since the whole society joins in the conscious making of history.

2. The Role of the Personality in History

While stressing the determining role of the masses in historical progress, Marxism does not disregard the influence of certain distinguished personalities on the course of history and on social development. On the contrary, such personalities are assigned a big role and their activities are considered essential for social progress, producing a certain impact on it.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 524.

The fact is that no group of people or society can do without leadership or without persons to lead it. These persons are called upon to work out a programme of action for the members of society (the class, party, state) and organise them to implement it. "Not a single class in history has achieved power without producing its political leaders, its prominent representatives able to organise a movement and lead it."[1]

What influence, however, do great personalities exert on historical progress? Their impact on society depends on the extent to which they realise the actual needs of society and on how far they express the requisite trends of the time and promote their implementation. Great personalities advance the tasks that have already been posed by the objective course of historical development, and organise people towards their realisation. The importance of the great personality thus lies not in the fact that he, in Plekhanov's words, "can halt or change the natural course of things, but in the sense that his activities are the conscious and free expression of that necessary and unconscious course".[2] It is this that sets the great personality apart from the mass of other people and assigns him a special historical role in social development.

Indeed, it was a historical necessity in France, for example, that the obsolete feudal political institutions be replaced with new ones that corres-

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 370.

[2] G. V. Plekhanov, *Selected Philosophical Works*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1976, p. 314.

ponded better to the capitalist production relations developing within feudal society in the latter half of the 18th century. It was thus those people who best realised this necessity and contributed to its realisation that became great personalities of the period. The transition to socialism has become a historical necessity in the 19th and the 20th centuries. Correspondingly, it is those people who realised the necessity of and became leaders in the struggle of the proletariat and of all working people to remake society along socialist lines, that are regarded as great personalities.

These personalities emerge whenever society is in need of them. In other words, they appear on the historical scene when great tasks requiring the unified efforts of many people emerge within society. The activities of personalities are thus in no way accidental, but rather necessitated by objective causes that take shape irrespective of people's will or wish and are conditioned by the course of historical progress. It is only the specific choice of the personality entrusted with the task of solving the outstanding social problems and of meeting one social requirement or another, that is a matter of chance. "That such and such a man and precisely that man arises at a particular time," Engels wrote, "is, of course, pure chance. But cut him out and there will be a demand for a substitute, and this substitute will be found, good or bad, but in the long run he will be found. That Napoleon, just that particular Corsican, should have been the military dictator whom the French Republic, exhausted by its own

warfare, had rendered necessary, was chance; but that, if a Napoleon had been lacking, another would have filled the place, is proved by the fact that the man was always found as soon as he became necessary: Caesar, Augustus, Cromwell, etc. While Marx discovered the materialist conception of history, Thierry, Mignet, Guizot and all the English historians up to 1850 are evidence it was being striven for, and the discovery of the same conception by Morgan proves that the time was ripe for it and that it simply *had* to be discovered."[1]

Being moved by circumstances to positions of command and resolving the tasks posed by historical development, the great personality exerts a definite influence on the course of social progress and on certain events: he may accelerate or retard them, but he cannot change the direction of historical progress, for this is determined not by the will or wish of great personalities, but by the objective laws of social development.

When defining the role of a great personality in society's development, account must be taken of the class he represents and whose interests he expresses. If he represents the class which has become historically obsolete, then his activities retard social progress, whereas. if he expresses the interests of the emerging class, then he contributes to and accelerates social progress. It follows that the role of great personalities should be assessed in its historical context, by taking ac-

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 503.

count of circumstances and the surrounding objective conditions. Thus, great personalities connected with the bourgeoisie as a class played directly opposite roles in different periods of historical development: they were progressive when they fought feudalism, but reactionary when they opposed socialist transformations. Great personalities who represent the interests of the proletariat always play a progressive role, since the interests of that class coincide completely with the requirements of historical progress.

3. Society and the Individual

a) The Individual as a Product of Social Development

Pre-Marxian sociologists failed to resolve the problem of the inter-relationships between society and the individual correctly: they either opposed one to the other or equated them. Modern subjective-idealist philosophy proclaims the individual to be the only social reality. As far as society is concerned, it is asserted to be a mechanical aggregate of separate individuals. Thus, for example, the modern US philosopher and sociologist Warner Fite asserts that only individuals are real and that only they have any importance, meaning that the individual denotes the type and direction of what is real, and that the only cognisable thing-in-itself is the individual.

The idealist interpretation of society's life makes it impossible to define man's essence. All pre-Marxian and modern idealist philosophers

tried to resolve it on the basis of the abstract "ideal man" devoid of any class identity and provided by nature with certain eternal and unchanging humanitarian qualities. There is no such thing, however, as the "ideal man" in isolation from society. The individual cannot be separated from society, for he grows, develops and is moulded within society which cannot but leave its imprint on him. "One cannot live in society and be free from society," Lenin wrote.[1] Society exerts a definite influence on the formation of the individual, but the type of society changes, of course, from one epoch to another, which means that the individual also changes and is characterised by the specific features of each epoch.

b) The Dialectics of the Interrelationship Between Society and the Individual

People in primitive society had their own specific features. The domination of collective labour on the basis of common ownership of the instruments of production brought about a situation when the objective and the intention of each member of the collective coincided with the interests of society as a whole. This unity of society and the individual is, however, primitive in nature, a result of the low level of development of the productive forces. This unity conditions the domination of the principle of collectivism in the consciousness of people in primitive society.These specific features bring about specific relations among

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 48.

people that are typical of this society, as well as a definite organisation of the family and definite moral, religious and aesthetic views, together with other aspects characterising the individual in the society concerned.

The emergence of antagonistic society with its division into irreconcilable classes contradicting each other in their relationship to the means of production and in their interests, leads to a situation where the interests of the individual clash with those of society as a whole. The opposing of the individual to society, which is typical of all antagonistic social systems, cannot however be presented–as some bourgeois scholars do–in the form of the individual's freedom from society's influence. It is conditioned by the specific features of a class society, which gives rise to a growth of individualism to replace the collectivism of the primitive communal system.

The influence of a class society on the formation and development of the individual manifests itself above all in the form of the influence exerted by the class to which he belongs, for since the economic and political position of the antagonistic classes is directly opposite, these influences are different.

"Every individual," Plekhanov wrote, "walks his own gait along the road of protest. However, where this road leads depends on the social environment of the protesting individual."[1]

Due to the difference in the position of anta-

[1] G. V. Plekhanov, *Art and Literature,* Moscow, 1948, p. 786 (in Russian).

gonistic classes, the influence of society on members of different classes differs too. Nevertheless, people from the same socio-economic system have certain common features associated with their culture, customs and traditions. This is because people of one socio-economic system and epoch are united by the existing production relations; they mutually influence each other in one way or another, live in one society, in the same country with definite geographical and national features–a fact that cannot but affect the formation and development of the individual.

The emergence of the new socialist order with socialist ownership of the means of production, the order characterised by relations of comradely co-operation and mutual assistance, leads to fundamentally different conditions for the formation of the individual and to new interrelationships between society and the individual. Socialist ownership of the means of production abolishes all grounds for social enmity, unifies the economic interests of people and consolidates their socio-political and ideological unity. The common goal of each individual and society as a whole–the building of communism–leads to a genuine unity of the individual and society.

This interrelationship between society and the individual differs radically not only from the relations of enmity typical of antagonistic systems, but also from the unity of social and personal interests that is a characteristic feature of the primitive-communal system. The latter, as we have seen, is an inevitable result of the extremely low

level of development of the productive forces, whereas the unity of society and the individual attained by socialism becomes a reality only as a result of a very high level of development of the productive forces.

Socialism also signifies a new stage in the development of the individual himself. For the first time, society becomes interested in the harmonious and all-round development of all its members and seeks to create all the conditions required for this. Naturally, this could not happen under the primitive-communal system, where the level of development of the productive forces was so low that it left no chance for the other sides of the individual besides his physique to develop. Neither can they develop under antagonistic systems where the opportunities for the individual to develop culturally, mentally and in other ways, exist only for a small privileged part of society, acquired through exploitation of the overwhelming majority of the population.

The unity of society and the individual under socialism does not, however, exclude contradictions between them. These are brought about by the difficulties arising during the building of socialism and communism, and by the lag of people's consciousness behind social being. This explains the anti-social behaviour on the part of some members of socialist society, and by other factors. But these contradictions, first, concern only a few members of socialist society and, second, are successfully overcome in the course of building communism.

No matter how great the socialist gains are in the field of social equality, socialism cannot yet eradicate elements of inequality in different spheres of society's life. Class distinctions still survive, of course, and they are revealed in the differences existing in socio-economic and cultural conditions, as well as in the disparate life-styles of town and country. Socialism, as Marx and Lenin pointed out, does not create complete equality in the distribution of consumer goods, and this results in the unequal material condition of members of socialist society and unequal opportunities for the cultural development of the individual.

Communism overcomes this deficiency of the socialist stage of development. A true social equality between people will be established in society as a result of the fusion of the two forms of socialist ownership into a single communist one, when the essential differences between the working class, the peasantry and the intelligentsia are overcome, and the communist principle of distribution in accordance with individual needs is put into effect. "Under communism," the CPSU Programme says, "all people will have equal status in society, will stand in the same relation to the means of production, will enjoy equal conditions of work and distribution, and will actively participate in the management of public affairs. Harmonious relations will be established between the individual and society on the basis of the unity of public and personal interests."[1]

[1] *The Road to Communism*, p. 510.

Chapter XVII

SOCIAL PROGRESS

1. The Concept of Social Progress

The idea of social progress was put forward by bourgeois ideologists at the dawn of capitalism, when the capitalist mode of production that arose in the heart of feudalism was ready to replace the historically obsolete economic form based on the individual employment of small-scale means of labour and on the system of serfdom.

Ideologists of the young bourgeoisie, while opposing the theological substantiation of the divine origin and the invariability of the social and state system, argued that feudalism was historically transitory in nature and that it would inevitably be supplanted by a new and more advanced system. At that time the bourgeoisie believed that there was unlimited scope for improving human society on the basis of science and reason.

The views of Johann Herder (1744-1803), an ideologist of the German Enlighteners, are an example of how such theories were substantiated. According to him, history represents an unbroken chain of developments where each link is connected with those before and after it. Each link is a consequence of previous development and of necessity passes to a new and more progressive stage.

While advancing a correct idea concerning society's transition from lower to higher stages, Herder failed to give it a scientific substantiation, for he himself held idealistic views of society's life. He held that it was the level of cultural development, incorporating science, art, religion, the state, etc., as its main components, that played the determining role in social development.

French bourgeois ideologists, such as Anne Robert Jacques Turgot (1727-1781) and Jean Condorset (1743-1794) also developed a theory of social progress. Turgot said, among other things, that mankind was marching on towards ever greater perfection. Both he and his follower Condorset associated this perfection, however, with unlimited development of the human intellect, science and art, i.e. they were, in fact, idealists.

Hegel also recognised historical progress, viewing it as a consequence of developing the knowledge of freedom.

While they subscribed to the idea of social progress at a time when the capitalist mode of production was fighting to assert itself and when the bourgeoisie was engaged in a struggle for power, bourgeois sociologists began to depart from this idea as soon as the capitalist mode of production became dominant in society. Then it became necessary for the bourgeoisie to substantiate the eternal nature of the capitalist social system, the capitalist state and the capitalist way of life. In response to this necessity theories emerged which made bourgeois society the limit of pro-

gress, proclaiming capitalism the highest form of social development. Among such views were the theories of the French bourgeois sociologist and philosopher Auguste Comte (1798-1857) and those of the British sociologist and philosopher Herbert Spencer (1820-1903).

At the time when capitalist society was entering the imperialist stage and the contradictions of capitalism were manifesting themselves more and more acutely, concepts emerged rejecting historical progress and propagating the idea of regressive motion and repetition in society's life.

It was, in particular, the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) who advanced these views. He held that the motion of society and the surrounding world is not progressive or in a forward direction, but an eternal recurrence of the forms and stages of development that had already been passed.

Modern bourgeois ideologists who argue the absence of progress in society's life, include, for instance, the contemporary French philosopher Emile Bréhier. His line of reasoning is that there are no phases in society's development forming stages of progress. There are only different and quite independent social structures that are not connected into a single chain of progression from the lower to the higher. Each of these stages arises, exists and perishes in complete isolation.

These views, however, definitely conflict with reality. The history of human society is evidence that social structures do not appear out of no-

where, but arise on the basis of a previous structure due to certain specific changes in the latter.

Social structures do not disappear without a trace after becoming historically obsolete. They develop into new and more advanced social structures. In other words, between the past social structure and the existing one there is a historical (genetic) link which conditions the uninterrupted development of human society.

The well-known US psychologist Edward Lee Thorndike uses other arguments to prove the absence of progress in society. He claims that each historical epoch has specific features of its own and that the standards of one epoch are quite different from those of another. If this is so, he continues, how can it be decided which epoch is better and more progressive? In order to compare them one needs a specific criterion, but no such criterion exists. By changing one social state or another, Thorndike reasons, people intend to obtain something better, but, as a rule, this does not happen, for an improvement in one thing is inevitably accompanied by a deterioration in another. We have aviation but we do not have a Shakespeare. The iconoclasts who used to destroy statues, break stained-glass windows and smear religious paintings, set out to deprive the church of idolatry and cared least of all about the irreparable damage they inflicted on art, archaeology and history. Those who advocated laws forbidding the exploitation of child labour had no idea that these laws would encourage idleness and become a cause of juvenile delinquency. "...The more we study the

past, the more we find that it was right, not wrong. . .," writes Thorndike[1] and concludes that no attempts should be made to change the existing reality since it is fair and correct in itself. If we still are uncertain, our hesitations will disappear with time. If capitalist production relations seem abnormal to some people, and if they do not like private property, exploitation, unemployment and crises, they should not, according to Thorndike, wish to eradicate these phenomena, for the result is bound to be something even worse. They would then realise that everything (private property, exploitation, etc.) is not so bad after all, and even fair.

The link between Thorndike's views and the class interests of the bourgeoisie, as well as their reactionary essence, are as evident as is their anti-scientific nature and irrelevance to the true situation.

Capitalist relations, private ownership of the means of production, exploitation, unemployment, crises and the bourgeoisie itself as a class, together with its sociologists, have all been eradicated in socialist society and no one, save for the bourgeoisie, is sorry that this has happened.

During the revolutionary destruction of the old and obsolete, there were, of course, cases when something was destroyed by mistake (some works of art, architectural and historical monuments, etc.). These instances are not, however, the main and determining features typifying the nature

[1] *The American Historical Review*, Vol. LXI, No. 2, January, 1956, pp. 282-83.

and significance of these changes. They are definitely outweighed by the huge torrent of positive change bringing about a new and more progressive social system and a more advanced way of life.

It was Marx and Engels who, for the first time, scientifically substantiated social progress on the basis of the dialectico-materialist interpretation of history.

According to Marx and Engels, history represents a consecutive supplanting of separate generations, each of which utilises the productive forces inherited from the previous generations. In view of this, the new generation both continues the inherent activity under the totally different conditions and changes it in accordance with the new conditions.[1] For this reason, there is a linkage in human history consisting in the movement from one stage of social development to another, from one social system to a more advanced one. All the social systems that replace one another in the course of history represent, according to Marx and Engels, mere stages in the infinite development of human society from the lower to the higher. "Each stage is necessary, and therefore justified for the time and conditions to which it owes its origin. But in the face of new, higher conditions which gradually develop in its womb, it loses its validity and justification. It must give way to a

[1] See K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, pp. 60-61.

higher stage which will also in its turn decay and perish."[1]

Thus, society does not mark time, nor does it repeat the forms already passed, but is constantly on the move and changing from the lower to the higher, from the worse to the better. It is with this forward movement based on the development of the productive forces that historical materialism associates the essence of social progress.

2. The Objective Criterion of Social Progress

As already mentioned, society, while changing from the lower to the higher, passes through strictly definite stages of development. In the course of historical analysis, the task arises of singling out these stages and defining the specific features of each of them. The singling out of stages of development passed through by peoples and mankind as a whole presupposes the choice of an objective criterion of progress and the establishment of a determining aspect of society's life, whose changes are associated with society's development from the lower to the higher and condition this development.

It is the productive forces that Marxism takes as the determining aspect in the life of society. These represent a factor which ultimately determines all other aspects of the social organism.

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 339.

Their state and level of development determine the production relations of people in society, which directly influence the entire system of superstructural phenomena and relations. The level of development of the productive forces characterises the degree of man's domination over nature and its spontaneous forces. This level is vital to the total amount of material wealth produced in society and, at the same time, to the quantity of labour expended by society to develop the means of production, science, art and other spheres of life. "A surplus of the product of labour over and above the costs of maintenance of the labour," Engels wrote, "and the formation and enlargement, out of this surplus, of a social production and reserve fund, was and is the basis of all social, political and intellectual progress."[1]

The level of development of the productive forces is thus the main indicator of the progress achieved by a nation.

This factor alone is not, however, sufficient in itself to determine the stage of progress attained by a nation. The level of development of the productive forces determines the essence of the social organism only in the final count. It is production relations that exert a direct influence on the life of society.

If, in determining the stage of social development of a nation, only the level of the productive forces is taken into consideration, societies representing different stages of development may be

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 231.

erroneously classified as belonging to one group. The same productive forces, however, may accompany different kinds of production relations, because obsolete production relations are not automatically replaced by new ones corresponding to the attained level of the productive forces, and not in all countries at once, but gradually, as soon as the necessary conditions are ripe. It may happen, therefore, that in some countries a certain level of development of the productive forces coexists with obsolete production relations, while in others it may combine with the new production relations corresponding to this level. If this factor is ignored, one can make mistakes similar to that committed by the advocates of the "industrial society" theory (Raymond Aron, Jean Fourastié, Robert Angell, Jessie Bernard and others). By taking as their point of departure the fact that essentially the same technology and an approximately equal level of the productive forces exist both in the Soviet Union and in the industrialised capitalist countries like Britain, France, and the USA, these ideologists assert that these countries belong to one and the same stage of social development and that they are in a state of transition to the "industrial society".

The rise of this theory should not, however, be totally attributed to the above mistake, but rather to a desire to prove that there is virtually no difference between capitalism and socialism, that these systems have a similar social nature and thus there is no need for a socialist revolution. Their views clearly tend to disregard the

nature of the production relations associated with the relevant productive forces.

Hence, *the level of development of the productive forces and the production relations within whose bounds the productive forces function and develop, represents an objective criterion of society's progress.* The productive forces determine the degree of man's domination over nature and its spontaneous forces, while production relations determine that of man's domination over the spontaneous forces of society and of man's emancipation from the sway of these forces.

3. Socio-Economic Systems as Stages of Society's Progress

The study of the productive forces in conjunction with production relations allowed Marx to notice the recurrent features in the life of different countries and nations, single out the basic stages of society's progress and work out, on this basis, the notion of a socio-economic system. Stressing the determining role of the level of development of the productive forces and, in particular, of the means of labour, for separating the stages of social progress, Marx wrote: "Relics of bygone instruments of labour possess the same importance for the investigation of extinct economic forms of society, as do fossil bones for the determination of extinct species of animals. It is not the articles made, but how they are made, and by what instruments, that enables us to distinguish different economic epochs. Instruments

of labour not only supply a standard of the degree of development to which human labour has attained, but they are also indicators of the social conditions under which that labour is carried on."[1]

Pointing to the means of labour as a factor behind the level of society's development and distinguishing the stages of this development, Marx assigns the main role to the way people combine with the means of labour, i.e. to production relations. It is the nature of production relations and the specific way in which people are connected with the means of labour or, to put it more precisely, with the means of production that, in Marx's words, "distinguishes the different economic epochs. . .".[2]

Taking the level of development of the productive forces and of the corresponding production relations as the criterion for social progress. Marx distinguished five socio-economic systems: *the primitive-communal, slave-owning, feudal, capitalist and communist.*

Each of these systems represents a society at a definite stage of historical development, which is characterised by a definite level of the productive forces and the corresponding production relations, by the resultant system of diverse ideas and institutions, and by a definite type of family and other relations.

The primitive-communal (or tribal) system represents the initial stage in the existence of human

[1] K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, pp. 175-76.
[2] K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. II, p. 36.

society. It is characterised by poorly developed productive forces. The means of labour utilised at that time did not allow man to fight the forces of nature on his own or to procure the essential means of subsistence. All this necessitated collective labour, which laid the foundations for communal ownership of the means of production, equal distribution and relations of co-operation and mutual assistance among people. There was no state, no classes, no law. Social functions were performed by people elected by all the members of the community, who entirely relied on their authority, trust and respect in performing their activities. Social intercourse was based entirely on moral norms and customs.

With the emergence of improved instruments of production, the possibility arose of working alone or in families. This eradicated the need for collective labour and a communal economy. People began switching over to privately-managed economies which, under those historical conditions, were more productive. Private property appeared on the basis of individual labour. With the institution of private property, the development of the productive forces resulted in differences in the property status of society's members and then among the antagonistic classes–the slaves and the slave-owners. The inception of classes and the class struggle was followed by the rise of the state, together with politics and law.

In this way society passed to a new and higher stage in its development, which became known as *the slave-owning* socio-economic system.

The possibility of obtaining more material wealth than was required to sustain the direct producer's existence, was a specific feature of the productive forces under this system. Its production relations were based on the slave-owner's complete ownership of the means of production and of the labourer, who was treated as a "talking instrument of labour". Society's affairs were managed by the state, used by the slave-owners to suppress the slaves.

The next stage in society's development was *feudalism.* Feudal production relations were based on the feudal lord's ownership of the land and on his partial ownership of the serf, whom he no longer had the right to kill, but could still sell, punish or force to work for his own benefit. In feudal society, apart from the feudal lord's property, the serfs had means of labour of their own, and there was also a personal economic sector, based on personal labour. The peasant received from the landlord a plot of land, on which he organised his individual household and created the necessary means of subsistence for himself and his family. The peasant returned a part of the means of subsistence created by him, either in cash or in kind, to the feudal lord, or had to work the feudal lord's land with his means of labour.

The feudal social system was more progressive than the previous, slave society. Under feudalism the direct producer had a certain interest in increasing the productivity of his labour.

Yet the feudal mode of production became his-

torically obsolete with the further development of the productive forces and with the spread of commodity-money relations and division of labour. It was replaced by *the capitalist* socio-economic system, based on capitalist private ownership of the means of production and hired labour. Among the specific features of capitalism are the socialisation of labour and machine production, which sharply enhanced the productive forces of society, and the concentration of wealth and poverty at society's opposite poles. Under capitalism the worker is formally free, but he is virtually dependent in economic terms, for he is deprived of the means of subsistence and is compelled to sell his labour-power to the capitalist who appropriates the surplus value, created by the worker, in the form of profit.

Though the capitalist mode of production was progressive at a definite stage in the development of human society, it later became a brake on social progress due to the intensification of the built-in contradiction between the productive forces and production relations. This was revealed, in particular, in the conflict between the social nature of production and the private form of appropriation. During the socialist revolution effected by the proletariat in alliance with the peasantry and other sections of the working people, capitalism is supplanted by the new, socialist mode of production, which represents the economic basis of the new, *communist* socio-economic system.

The communist socio-economic system is marked by an unprecedentedly high level of develop-

ment of the productive forces, capable of ensuring the production of the abundant material wealth required to meet all society's demands. Here, production relations are associated with the domination of the single communist ownership of the means of production, the absence of classes and class distinctions and the operation of the principle from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs. The state will wither away and be replaced by communist self-administration. Law will disappear together with the state. Social intercourse will be regulated by moral norms, resting on the force of public opinion.

Such are some of the features of the basic stages in society's historical progress, which assume the form of five socio-economic systems through which mankind passes.

Marx viewed society's transition from one system to another as an intrinsic law of human history in general. Humanity consecutively passes through all of them. Each of them is essential at a definite stage in society's progress and acts as a spring-board for the emergence of a new and higher one. "No social order," Marx wrote, "ever perishes before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have developed; and new, higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the society itself."[1]

Bourgeois sociologists advance concepts in an

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 504.

attempt to refute the Marxist theory of socio-economic systems, which associates society's transition from one stage of development to another higher one with the replacement of production relations, representing the outcome of the development of the productive forces. They disregard the link between society's development and the change in production relations. Among them is the theory of "stages of economic growth" advocated by the US sociologist Walter Rostow.

Rostow takes the degree of utilisation of scientific and technical achievements in production, as well as the level of consumption, as criteria of social progress. Proceeding from these criteria, he divides the history of human society into five consecutive stages: (1) the pre-Newtonian stage of science and technology; (2) the transformative stage of traditional society and the creation of conditions for utilising the achievements of modern science; (3) the sharp upswing in the level of technical development; (4) the movement-towards-maturity period, when society begins to effectively utilise modern scientific and technological achievements; (5) the high mass consumption period, when the main industries switch over to manufacturing consumer goods.

Rostow's concept is characterised by an artificial manner of phasing human history into the above stages of development and by the absence of clear-cut definitions of each stage. Not by chance does Rostow disregard production relations which alone can express the essence of any stage in the development of the social organism. Such an ap-

proach allows him to escape analysis of the class structure of society, of the forms of ownership that supplant one another in history and the corresponding forms of exploitation and, what is more, to present the evolution of antagonistic society as a process by which science is increasingly subordinated to production.

This theory undoubtedly serves the interests of the bourgeoisie, since it distracts the working people's attention from the class contradictions inherent in capitalist society and proves the possibility of improving the position of the masses within capitalist production relations on the basis of technical progress alone.

4. The Specific Features of Progress in Exploiting Society

There are two clear-cut types of progress in the history of human society. One of them is typical of the antagonistic formation, while the other takes place in socialist and communist society.

In antagonistic societies progress is attained on the basis of the exploitation of one class by another, so progressive development of some classes goes hand-in-hand with regression of others. "Since the exploitation of one class by another," Engels wrote, "is the basis of civilisation, its whole development moves in a continuous contradiction. Every advance in production is at the same time a retrogression in the condition of the oppress-

ed class, that is, of the great majority. What is a boon for the one is necessarily a bane for the other; each new emancipation of one class always means a new oppression of another class."[1]

This trend manifests itself both within a single country and internationally. Having gone forward in their development, some nations conquer others and begin to develop more rapidly by exploiting them. The oppressed nations are often not only deprived of a chance to develop further, but are thrown back. A relevant example is the development of industrialised capitalist countries (Britain, France, etc.) through the plunder of numerous Asian, African and Latin American countries. Describing the progress of the bourgeoisie in some spheres of society's life, Marx wrote: "Has it ever effected a progress without dragging individuals and peoples through blood and dirt, through misery and degradation?"[2]

The main feature of an antagonistic society is that progress does not extend to all spheres of life. The development of some aspects often proceeds simultaneously with retrogression of others. For example, the supplanting of slave-owning production relations by feudal ones resulted in considerable progress in production, but the establishment of the religious ideology that accompanied it led to a regression in culture. Or take another

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 333.

[2] K. Marx and F. Engels, *On Britain*, Moscow, 1962, p. 404.

example, under capitalism considerable progress in technology is accompanied by a regression in art, philosophy, etc.

5. The Specific Features of Progress Under Socialism

The abolition of private ownership of the means of production and of the conditions for the exploitation of man by man greatly affects the nature of society's progress, which becomes qualitatively different.

As distinct from exploiting society, under socialism the progressive development affects all the working sections of the country, all classes and social groups. Moreover, socialism, for the first time, gives rise to conditions making it possible to bridge the gap that arose under the previous systems between the level of development of the various classes and strata in society. Under socialism, in particular, the considerable differences between town and country, between mental and manual labour are being gradually overcome.

Socialist society creates, for the first time, the conditions necessary for closing the gap in the development level of different nationalities. Thanks to all-round assistance from the technically developed nations, the formerly backward countries that were still at the stage of feudalism or even of the primitive-communal system bypass capitalism and start building socialism. They are mastering modern science, engineering and other

achievements of human culture, thus joining the ranks of the industrialised nations.

Harmonious development is a major feature of progress in socialist society, which being all-embracing in nature, more or less evenly affects all the spheres of society's life.

In contrast to class-antagonistic society, where booms alternate with recessions and regressive changes, progress in socialist society is continuous and unlimited. The domination of socialist ownership of the means of production creates virtually unlimited possibilities for improving all aspects of society's life.

Furthermore, since in socialist society progressive development corresponds to the interests of all of its members, the masses take a most active part in it. This, in particular, explains the growing tempo of social development and the accelerated movement forward. "... *Only* socialism," Lenin wrote, "will be the beginning of a rapid, genuine, truly mass forward movement, embracing first the *majority* and then the whole of the population, in all spheres of public and private life."[1]

Planning is another specific feature of progress under socialism. Under previous economic systems there were no objective conditions for cognising and consciously applying social laws, which operated spontaneously and destructively, in the interests of progressive development. It is only

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[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 477.

socialist society that provides such an opportunity. Under socialism, Engels noted, "the extraneous objective forces that have hitherto governed history pass under the control of man himself. Only from that time will man himself, with full consciousness, make his own history. . .".[1]

Such are the specific features of progress under socialism and communism, showing that this is progress of a new type.

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 336.

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